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ABSTRACT

The Laverne Proposal on Regionalism in Education is aimed at developing a system of public education (including the financing of education) in New York State that would be responsive to the needs of all the State's children. This document presents the Laverne Proposal and compares it with several others. The Proposal recommends the adoption of a 2-tiered operational system for elementary and secondary education and the decentralization of the State Education Department into regional offices. Each regional office of the department would support and advise the two operational tiers. The role of each operational tier would be designed to complement what is done by the other. Programs that could best be handled at the local level would be assigned to tier one. Those that could be carried out more economically or more effectively on a multi-district basis would be assigned to tier two. The report explains the proposal in detail and examines how it might be modified towards improvement. (Author/JF)

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Regionalism: Helping Schools Meet Children's Needs

Study Document - December 1972

JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON METROPOLITAN AND REGIONAL AREAS STUDY

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REGIONALISM: HELPING SCHOOLS MEET CHILDREN'S NEEDS

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Regionalism: Helping Schools Meet Children's Needs

SUMMARY

The vexing problem of school finance, with which this Committee has been grappling since 1966, has now reached the national limelight. Inequities identified in earlier Committee reports have caught the attention of the courts, Congress, Federal study commissions and the President. The pressure for change is mounting.

The New York State Legislature must shoulder its responsibility in this area as the state's policy-making body. New policy is required on both school finance and on measures to guarantee the quality of education.

Steps must be taken now to serve the interest of the most important person in the school system, the pupil. We must guarantee that all our youngsters get the preparation for life to which they are entitled: whether their need is the encouragement of special talents - or just the need to learn a few ways to survive in this world.

Preliminary Proposal

The Laverne Proposal on Regionalism in Education is presented here as a preliminary proposal for a new State policy on education. It is compared with three other proposals.

New York's system of public elementary and secondary education, despite many successes, has not yet succeeded in providing equal educctional opportunity to all its children.

To a great extent, this is because of the design of the system. Four defects in this design which need to be changed are: (1) the method of finance, (2) the influence of the cost factor on placement decisions, (3) overcentralization in the State Education Department and (4) the lack of effective techniques for evaluating pupil progress and measuring school performance, for letting us know what the schools are really doing.

The financial problem has reached a crisis stage. Some response to the problem is inevitable. A change in the financial system will present an opportunity for changing the overall framework of the educational system. This opportunity must be acted upon in a way which will enable the schools to be more effective.

Three Major Objectives

The Laverne Proposal has three major objectives:

1. to develop a system which can meet the educational needs of all children by providing a wide range of programs to cover all identified educational needs,

2. to develop a system which can match each child with the program which best answers his needs, and

3. to accomplish the first two objectives by building on what already exists, rather than by attempting to create something entirely new.

This Committee has long been interested in finding a substitute for the local real property tax in financing elementary and secondary education. The Committee encountered the property tax problem in its study of local planning and

zoning. The rapidly-rising costs of education have overburdened the property tax. This has led localities to use land-use controls as a device for fiscal self-defense. It has become obvious that if we want to improve the use of land, we must "take the children out of zoning."

The Present System: Its Successes and Its Problems

The schools in New York State have become very effective in an approach to education which suits the needs of earlier times. It is no longer enough to pass on a body of knowledge. What must be passed on now is the ability to cope with a constantly changing society. The schools must furthermore be effective now not only with the brightest students, but also with those who have special educational needs. They should be as enthusiastic in teaching skills as they are in operating academic programs.

The change required cannot come only from the top or only from within the educational system. Whole communities must participate in the improvement of education. Local control must develop into energetic public participation in the development of schools and school districts. Local districts must be given the flexibility they need to make broad public participation -- particularly participation by parents -- meaningful and effective.

Local Districts

Accountability in the present network of 757 local school districts for meeting State minimum standards and for reporting budgetary plans and expenditures is fragmented. Some school districts are accountable to both a district

superintendent and the State Education Department. Other school districts are accountable directly to the department.

BOCES

The Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), originally set up as a temporary system pending the development of intermediate school districts, have been successful where they have developed, but they have not developed evenly throughout the State. If the BOCES system were made financially independent, the BOCES could overcome the problems which have kept it from developing in certain areas. The exclusion of the state's large cities from the BOCES system prevents the major metropolitan areas from developing regional responses to regional needs in education.

District Superintendents

District Superintendents, key figures in the BOCES, are typically highly experienced school administrators. But, they are burdened with a complex set of responsibilities which contain built-in conflicts. As State officials, they supervise local districts; as BOCES executives, they serve local districts.

BOCES and Pupil Placement

For financial reasons, many children who ought to be sent to special BOCES programs are assigned instead to non-regents programs in local districts, where they simply mark time until they become either "drop-outs" or "pass outs." A "pass out" is a child who gets a diploma without having met any standard of achievement.

The Laverne Proposal: Two Independent Tiers and a Decentralized Department of Education

The Laverne Proposal recommends: (1) the adoption of a two-tiered operational system for elementary and secondary education, and (2) decentralization of the State Education Department into regional offices. Although the two operational tiers could be financially independent, the success of their programs would depend on an active flow of formal and informal communication. The regional offices of the State Education Department would support the work of the two operational tiers. They would not, however, exercise control. Both the local and regional districts would be governed by their own popularly-elected boards.

Tier One

The first tier of the proposed system is made up of local school districts. The only change proposed in the role of the existing school districts is to relieve them of the burden of providing special educational programs. This would enable them to focus their resources on the general educational needs of children.

Tier Two

The second tier of the proposed system would be a regional school system built on the existing BOCES system. This regional system could be financed by State funds; it would then be less dependent on contracts with local school districts. If State financing is to be phased in gradually, it could start with total financing of the second tier.

This tier would be given its own mission: (1) specific

responsibility for occupational, vocational and special educational programs and shared services, and (2) responsibility for administering regional schools. The special education services of the regional school systems could be integrated into the school programs of the local school districts. The intent here is to separate responsibilities; this can be done without isolating special education activities -- without isolating children who have learning problems.

Regional Offices of the State Education Department

The State Education Department would be decentralized by creating a network of regional offices throughout the State. This would not require additional personnel for functions now being performed adequately. Many members of the headquarters staff, as well as many of the professionals working in local districts, could be transferred to the staffs of the regional offices. The regional staff could be placed wherever they could most effectively provide their services.

Generally, decentralization would apply to advisory, supportive and coordinating functions. General central functions, such as central policy decisions and overall supervision, would remain in Albany.

Monitoring Pupil Progress

The regional offices of the State Education Department should be equipped to take full advantage of the most advanced techniques for diagnosing the educational needs of children and for monitoring pupil progress and school performance. These functions should be separated from operational school districts by placing child development and diagnostic centers

under regional offices. Such an arrangement would remove a major bias in diagnosis in the present system. Diagnosis would be done in cooperation with parents and teachers.

State programs for handicapped children could be improved through cooperation with these diagnostic centers. The two most frequently used programs are those established by sections 4403 and 4407 of the Education Law. Section 4403 is used on an order by a family court. Because family courts vary, the consistency of the use of the 4403 program varies. Section 4407, poorly designed and very costly ($13.6 million for 6,800 children in 1971-72), encourages school districts to pass their responsibility for serving handicapped children off to private institutions -- including unsupervised institutions outside the state.

Other advantages of decentralizing the department are that it would make it possible to have:

* Regional or Statewide Bargaining for teachers. This would eliminate the economic whipsaw which now confronts local districts.

* Regional Support for Other Institutional Education. This would offset one of the truly tragic results of the lack of coordination in education, the attempt to operate educational programs in the mental health and correctional systems without the help of the expertise available in the Department of Education.

* A Regional Focus for Education. This would enable the public schools to draw on agencies outside public education -- private schools, colleges and universities,

arts and cultural organizations, libraries and museums. It would also make it possible to relate educational needs and plans to all the other needs of a region by coordinating educational planning with a comprehensive development plan.

Regents Task Force Proposal

The New York State Regents Task Force on Regionalism proposes a regional approach, aimed at generating adaptability and flexibility in the educational system. It would improve and build on the existing BOCES without changing the basic BOCES structure. BOCES would still be financially dependent or local school districts, while at the same time, they would continue to be the basic unit for regional development. A broadened service base would be developed through contracts between BOCES to form "multi-BOCES arrangements." Regions would not be pre-defined. The "multi-BOCES arrangements" seem, however, to be patchwork structures built on other patchwork structures.

The BOCES and the district superintendent would serve as regional coordinators, educational change agents, field offices of the State Education Department, and shared service agencies.

The Regents Task Force proposal would continue to combine conflicting responsibilities in the role of the district superintendent. To the existing combination, a third relationship would be added, a contractual relationship with a "multi-BOCES arrangement."

Fleischmann Commission Proposal: Governance

The New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost,

and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Fleischmann Commission) recommends a regional approach similar to that described in the Laverne Proposal. The Fleischmann regionalism proposals assume full state financing of the public schools and the institution of a single uniform type of school district.

In its chapter on Governance, the Commission makes four basic recommendations:

1. that individual schools be made responsible for many decisions on curriculum, personnel and budget which are now the responsibilities of school districts;

2. that small school districts be consolidated and that the "supervisory districts" set up to administer these small districts be eliminated;

3. that intermediate (regional) school systems provide special educational programs for handicapped students, vocational education and highly specialized courses as well as administrative services for school districts;

4. that multidisciplinary diagnostic teams be formed, through SED financing and BOCES administration to identify learning problems and to monitor recommended remedies.

The Commission proposed that each district have its own superintendent. This superintendent would have management responsibility and greater public reporting responsibilities for the school district. The school principals within each school district would assume greater operational responsibility, with the support of increased citizen participation. The District Superintendent would no longer be involved in the

internal operations of school districts.

The Commission found that the incentives for school districts to join BOCES were insufficient. It proposed that BOCES provide, through State funding, all high-cost instructional services and technical administrative services. The Commission suggested that many BOCES activities could take place in local schools rather than in special BOCES buildings.

To bring the benefits of BOCES to the State's large cities, the Commission recommends that these cities be included in the BOCES system. This is recommended not simply to achieve economies of scale but, more importantly, to permit joint action by cities and suburbs on area-wide problems. The report is not definite in recommending how the large cities should move into the BOCES system.

Representation

The governing body of BOCES, according to the Commission, does not guarantee that BOCES board members will be responsive to the needs of local school districts. The Commission favored the representation proposal developed by the Monroe County Educational Planning Committee. The governing body would continue to be elected by members of component school boards. But BOCES board members would be required to be members of local school boards, a new requirement.

The Fleischmann Commission proposed that the State Education Department be decentralized by gradually devolving the supervisory and supportive responsibilities of the State Education Department to BOCES, to a regional SED representative

or to Albany personnel responsible for a particular region. This delegation of responsibility would be done by the Commissioner in a pragmatic, function-by-function manner, on the basis of where in the educational hierarchy a function might best be performed.

In certain fields, such as programs for children with special needs (budget development, diagnostic procedures and program supervision) and pupil transportation, the Commission recommends regional administration. A BOCES executive would be chosen as a representative of the State Education Department to administer these programs. Coordination of education planning with comprehensive county and municipal planning, as well as coordination with higher education programs, is another major function which would be given to regional offices.

The regions which the Commission recommends for the educational system are, with minor variations and one major exception, the official State planning and development regions designated by the Governor. The major exception would be in the Tri-State Region covering the New York urban area -- New York City, Long Island and the counties north of New York City. A regional office is proposed for each of the three subsections of the Tri-State Region.

In New York City, the Fleischmann Commission recommended that a nine-member Central Board of Education be appointed by the Mayor: six members from a list of ten submitted by community school boards, and three members "at his total discretion." The Central School Board would serve as a city-

wide BOCES. Its chief executive, the Chancellor, would be the BOCES executive.

The Chancellor would be elected by the Central Board, subject to the approval of the State Commissioner of Education. The Central Board would operate the City's high schools, plan racial integration, define community school district boundaries, operate all pupil transportation and administer the school system's capital expenditure program. All those functions not specifically assigned to the Central Board would be performed by the Community School Districts. The operation of these districts would become comparable to that of the rest of the State's school districts.

In the Commission's recommendation on including the State's large cities in the BOCES system, no specific technique is recommended for integrating large cities into the existing BOCES system in a way which would promote, as effectively as possible, area-wide planning for the major metropolitan areas. This Committee considers the issue of area-wide BOCES for metropolitan areas too important to be left to chance. Legislation admitting the large cities into the BOCES system should either require the formation of metropolis-wide BOCES or contain strong incentives for their formation.

Monroe County Proposal: Federated Intermediate School District

The Monroe County Educational Planning Committee has proposed a "federated intermediate educational district" (FIED) to replace the BOCES. In Monroe County, where there are now two BOCES which do not include the City of Rochester, the FIED would become a countywide BOCES, including the city.

The specific functions of the FIED would be left to the discretion of the district's governing body. It would not, therefore, be given a clearly defined mission. It would continue to respond to needs as they are perceived by local school districts.

Organizing for Innovation: A Proposed "Education Research Agency"

A 1961 study of the problem of developing and introducing new education techniques into the public schools found that innovations, when they are attempted at all, are introduced into the public schools haphazardly, with no rigorous evaluation. The study identified design, experimentation and dissemination as key elements in innovation. Its analysis provides helpful guidance in designing a regionalized education system which is flexible enough to encourage careful innovation.

Project Redesign: Self-Renewal for Education

Project Redesign is the State Education Department's long range planning effort aimed at continuing self-renewal for the State's educational system. Its aim is to make the system responsive to local community needs. The redesign process has four key elements: planning, community involvement, local initiative and re-allocation of existing resources.

With the help of State and Federal funds, Redesign has been started in four of the State's school districts. Forty-nine districts in the rest of the State have begun redesign with no financial help from the State; 55 others have expressed active interest.

To expand Redesign throughout the State, the department proposes to use Title III Regional Centers. The status of these 16 centers, since Federal funding ended in June 1972, is uncertain. A stable, well-staffed network of regional offices is needed for Redesign.

Conclusion

In developing the Laverne Proposal on Regionalism in Education, this Committee will incorporate those elements of other proposals which will improve the preliminary proposal. The Committee intends to take full advantage of the thought and experience behind these other proposals.

The Laverne Proposal has assumed that there will be basic changes in the system for financing the schools and that these changes will make it possible to accomplish reforms which are more far-reaching than those which would be possible under the existing system. Other proposals assume that the present method of finance will continue. The difference in assumptions explains many of the differences in the proposals themselves.

The Committee will be seeking other insights into problems of implementation in the development of its final proposal. The Committee is aiming at a final product which will be more than a paper proposal. The final product should be one which will improve what happens in the classroom and which will improve the quality of the education we offer to our young people.

Areas for Experimentation

The Committee is interested in exploring the possibility

of taking advantage of impending reforms in school finance and governance to inject other reforms into the public school system. While school finance and governance reforms will not be enough by themselves to make the schools more effective, they do make the ground fertile for other changes which would directly affect what happens between teacher and child. The Committee has identified six such areas (see Figure 14):

1. Decentralization of the State Education Department through regionalism,
2. Rotation of professional personnel,
3. New techniques for supervision,
4. Replacement of teacher tenure with peer review,
5. Regional child development centers, and
6. Feeding programs at schools for the elderly and others.

Selected Legislative Problems

The BOCES system, as provided for in §1958 of the Education Law, is based on a theory of local choice. School districts may come and go within the BOCES system as they wish. Member school districts may select the services they want from among those offered by their BOCES.

BOCES has developed more extensively in the so-called wealthy districts. This is mainly because school districts with a high total assessed valuation receive more State aid under the BOCES aid formula than they do under the standard State aid formula. Aside from the disequalizing effect of the BOCES formula, the present system has other shortcomings, including uncertainty of program, problems of management and the exclusion

of large cities. Each of these items requires legislative action for correction.

Management

Two major points made in this proposal are: (1) that Tier Two (to be built on the existing BOCES system) should be independent, and (2) that the top executive of a Regional School District (now a BOCES) should not be hampered with responsibilities which conflict with the job of running a Regional School District. This would strengthen local control by enabling local districts to cooperate with each other on matters which are not manageable on a strictly local basis. It would improve management at the regional level by relieving the BOCES staff of management responsibility for Tier One.

Legislation should be introduced directing the Commissioner to create Regional Offices of the State Education Department. Whether or not it will be necessary to create the office of Assistant Commissioner for each region by legislation remains to be determined. It could perhaps be done administratively by the Commissioner. SED Regions could be defined by the Commissioner in cooperation with local districts and Regional School Districts. In any event, Article 45 of the Education Law, "Supervisory Districts," needs a complete revision.

The expansion of various areas of responsibility for the BOCES would require changes in §1958 of the Education Law, including amendments to provide:

1. Authority to conduct instruction for private school pupils under a dual enrollment arrangement,

2. Authority to centralize transportation systems and data processing systems,

3. BOCES membership for all school districts. The proportionate sharing of administrative costs could be continued. The aid formula should be redesigned.

District Superintendents' Salaries

A District Superintendent is paid from several sources, a situation which underscores the conflict of interest built into this office. When the Committee staff started to gather information on the office of District Superintendent, it discovered that no one in State government knows what these officials are being paid. Information on these salaries was collected by the Senate Committee on Education from the State Education Department, the Teachers Retirement System, the State Retirement Fund and from a telephone canvas of District Superintendents by the department.

If the State were to withdraw its financial support for salaries of the BOCES superintendents, this would make available approximately $ 800,000.00 a year for the operation of Regional SED offices.

The following legislation should be considered in order to regionalize the public school system:

1. A complete recodification of the Article concerning District Superintendents.

2. A directive to the Commissioner to create regions, and if deemed necessary, an office of Regional Assistant Commissioner.

3. Legislation to broaden the authority of BOCES to include that of data processing, dual enrollment and centralized transportation systems.

4. Revision of the BOCES State aid formula.

5. Legislation to modernize and update the governance of the BOCES.

6. Legislation to allow large cities to participate in BOCES.

* * *

Responsibility for effective school programs must be well defined. This definition of responsibility must be combined with the flexibility to innovate and with techniques for evaluating what these programs do for children, so that accountability can be made meaningful. A clarification of accountability and of evaluation will provide a better basis for both stimulating and assessing innovations in education.

Imminent change in the system of educational finance presents a unique opportunity for improving the schools. To take full advantage of this opportunity, we must change those features of the school system which inhibit the involvement of the local community, which limit educational opportunities for those with special talents or special problems, which cause the neglect of resources outside the schools. Cumbersome administrative arrangements, which limit the effectiveness of professionals in the schools and in the department, should be changed. The schools must be given the flexibility and support necessary to produce quality education for all our young people. A carefully designed regional system is required to make these improvements possible.

REGIONALISM: HELPING SCHOOLS MEET CHILDREN'S NEEDS

The Laverne Proposal on Regionalism in Education is aimed at developing a system of public education in New York State which is truly responsive to the needs of all our children. The purpose of the educational system is to provide all our young people the opportunity to acquire the skills needed to function effectively in our society.

Preliminary Proposal

This paper presents the Laverne Proposal and compares it with several other proposals. It is presented here intentionally as a preliminary proposal. It will be subjected to study and criticism by those throughout the state who are concerned about the schools.

Through regional workshops, the broad outline for reform presented in this proposal will be developed more completely. Problems related to the proposal's implementation will be identified; changes will be made in the proposal to cope with these problems. Following the workshops, legislation will be drafted to implement the final product.

The public elementary and secondary school system now in force in this state, despite its many successes, has not yet succeeded in providing equal educational opportunity. To make this criticism is not to criticize those who now make the schools work. Although there is occasional poor performance on the part of members of the educational system, this problem is a constant one in any human effort.

The exhaustive study of the New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Fleischmann Commission) has covered the school system generally. This proposal focuses on the need for developing a regional approach in education which will be effective in coping with regional problems.

Four Major Problems

The failure of the public education system to provide equal educational opportunity is to a great extent caused by a faulty design of the system itself. Four defects in this design which need to be changed are: the method of finance, the pressure of cost on placement decisions, overcentralization

and the lack of effective techniques for identifying individual problems and taking corrective action.

The method of finance is the major fault of the system's design. Because nearly half the funds needed for the schools come from the local property tax, resources for education are made a function of local property value, which varies greatly from one school district to another. The property tax base is too often segregated by rich and poor. Both the Fleischmann Commission and studies sponsored by this Committee have documented this inequity.

Pressure to make placement decisions on the basis of cost rather than on the basis of what children need results in the wrong kinds of decisions. This pressure flows from the method of financial support. Sharp increases in the frequency of school budget defeats underscore the pressure to economize. Coupled with inadequate techniques for diagnosing the needs of children, this pressure often results in decisions harmful to our young.

The centralization of the State Education Department in a large, centrally-located headquarters severely limits the effectiveness of the department's staff. The expertise of the department should be readily available to local school districts. Schools must have ready access to the department's advisory and supportive services so that they can be as effective as possible in helping their students meet the demands of a quickly changing society. Improved accessibility to the department's services must be combined with a strong emphasis on local control. Schools and school districts should have more flexibility in such matters as curriculum development. The local community, particularly parents, should participate in planning for educational change.

The lack of effective techniques for identifying and diagnosing children's problems prevents the school system from taking action to improve itself. Because accountability for performance is so fragmented in the existing organizational framework, evaluation of school performance is mainly self-evaluation. The result is often a biased evaluation. Learning problems are too readily presumed to be failures of children rather than failures of schools.

The financial problem of the schools has reached a crisis stage; some response to the problem is inevitable. This inevitability presents the opportunity for changing the overall framework of the educational system in a way which will enable the schools to teach more effectively.

Proposal's Basic Objectives

The regional system proposed here, designed to provide that sort of structural reform, has three basic objectives;

1. To develop a system which can meet the educational needs of all children by providing a wide range of programs to cover all identified educational needs.

2. To permit the effective use of techniques for matching each child with the program which best answers his need. Every child is entitled to get whatever special education he needs--whether his need is highly technical or just the need to learn a few ways to survive in this world. This matching should be done on the merits of each case. Such decisions are now too often made on the basis of cost.

3. To accomplish the first two objectives by building on what already exists. Reform which builds on institutions which are already accepted will have a greater chance of success than reform which attempts to create something entirely new.

Committee Interest

The Joint Legislative Committee on Metropolitan and Regional Areas Study has long been interested in apply the regional approach to public education and in finding a way of financing education other than the local property tax. The Committee discovered that problems in planning and zoning were created by the effect of local property tax, and that these problems in turn create problems in housing, employment and transportation.

Many localities are making planning and zoning decisions which will be harmful to them in the long run. Because of fiscal constraints, decisions are made on the basis of how they will affect municipal budgets and school district budgets in the short run. Localities compete for commercial and industrial centers, which produce a net gain for local finances. They try to avoid housing for large and low-income families, which produce a net loss in local revenues. Fiscal considerations too often outweigh the concern for the best use of land.

This Committee has proposed reforms which would improve local land-use decisions. But we recognize that these reforms cannot be fully successful unless we remove the need for localities to play the game of "fiscal zoning." We recognize that we cannot get good land-use decisions unless we relieve the local real property tax of the burden of supporting the schools.

The current financial problems of the schools show that this system of taxing creates at least as severe a problem for the educational system. The Committee has explored other alternatives for financing schools. Until now, however, interest in reforming educational finance has been academic.

The Property Tax: Growing Pressure for Change

This lack of urgency has been changed by a series of recent studies and court decisions. The first of these was the August 1971 decision of the California Supreme Court in the case of Serrano v. Priest, a decision which could well become as significant as Brown v. Board of Education. In Serrano, the court ruled that a tax system which produces widely varying per pupil revenues for school districts is unconstitutional. The right to a public school education, the court said, "is a fundamental interest which cannot be conditioned on wealth." Similar rulings have since been made by Federal courts in Minnesota and Texas, and by a state court in New Jersey. The Texas and New Jersey legislatures were given two years to restructure the taxing and financing systems for their schools. Other suits are in varying stages of the judicial process in a number of other states. Although a New York court recently rejected the Serrano argument, the trend is to accept the stand. More than a theoretical interest is now required on the part of state legislatures.

In New York, the Fleischmann Commission has recommended that the State take over school finance. The Laverne Proposal assumes that there will in fact be substantially greater State funding, and quite possibly full State funding, of the public schools. This projected change in financing will make extensive reforms possible. Even if State funding is not total, the substance of the reforms proposed here would be possible.

The Present System: Its Successes and Its Problems

The schools in New York State have become very effective in an approach to education which suits the needs of earlier times. Traditionally, the schools have passed on a body of knowledge from one generation to the next, at least toward those among the young who had no serious learning problems.

The responsibility of the schools has changed, however, particularly for three reasons. First, it is no longer enough to pass on a body of knowledge. In a fast-moving society, bodies of knowledge quickly become obsolete. What must be developed now is the ability to learn, the ability to adapt to a constantly changing society. Second, the schools must now be effective not

only with the brightest students. They must develop programs to suit the educational needs of all children. Third, they should become as enthusiastic in teaching skills as they are in operating academic programs.

The fundamental change needed in the educational system is not one which can be accomplished by a single design produced at the State level. The change needed is one which will overcome the isolation of the schools, which will draw on all the resources of the community and the region to improve education. This change cannot come only from within the educational system. Whole communities must participate in the improvement of education. Local control must develop into energetic public participation in the development of schools and school districts.

Local districts must be given the flexibility they need to make broad public participation meaningful and effective. The power to redesign curricula, so that the reform effort can involve both the neighborhood and the "world of work," must be decentralized to the local level. The State Education Department has moved in this direction with its program for "Redesign," described below. If this program is to meet its goals, it must be strongly supported. If a proposal for structural reform is to meet today's needs, it must support this kind of program.

Local Districts

The 757 local school districts in New York State have a public school enrollment of approximately 3.5 million pupils with roughly 185,000 classroom teachers. Some 784,000 pupils attend the 2,000 independent non-public schools in the State, which are also supervised by the State Education Department. By 1970, the public school system in New York State was costing more than $5 billion. In 1969, for the first time, the State aid portion of school expenditures was greater than the amount raised by local taxes. (In 1970, the State share again dropped below the local share.)

Accountability, in the present system, for meeting State minimum standards and for reporting budgetary plans and expenditures, is fragmented. See Figure 1. Common school districts and small central districts are accountable to both a district superintendent and the State Education Department. Other school districts are accountable directly to the department. Because of the large number of districts with which the centralized staff of the department is in contact, this staff is unable to carry out effectively its responsibilities for evaluating school district performance and for providing supportive services.

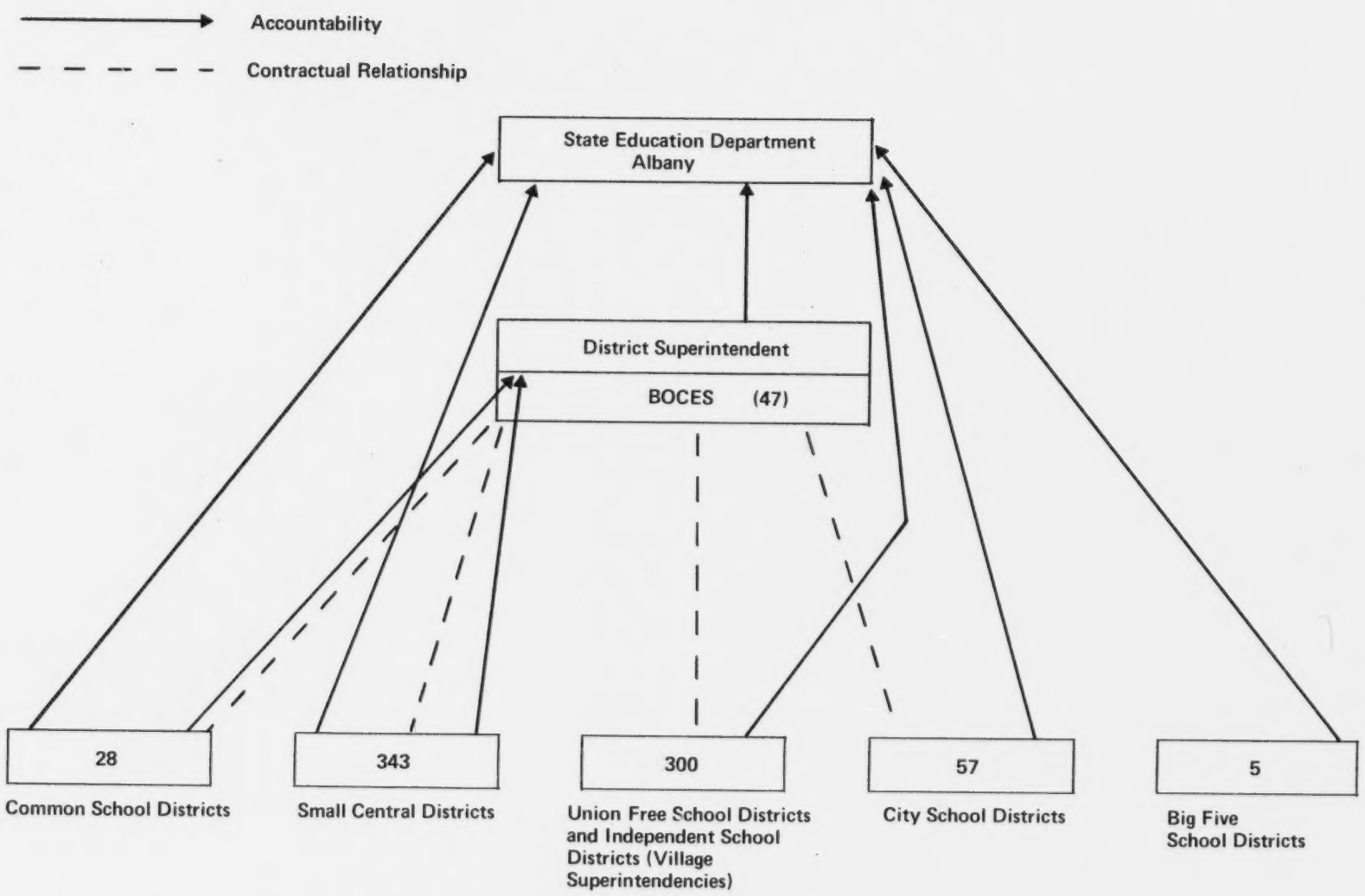

Figure 1. Present System: 1. Accountability Fragmented.
2. Dual Role for District Superintendent
(1) Field Agent for SED
(2) Executive for BOCES

BOCES

There are 47 Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). Federal funds cover approximately 6.7 percent of the $160 million BOCES costs for 1971-72 school year. Of the rest, 55 percent is covered by State funds, with the remainder coming from local districts. The BOCES system, originally intended as a temporary system pending the development of intermediate school districts and designed to serve the needs of rural areas, has developed extensively in suburban areas.

The emphasis in BOCES programs is now on occupational education. BOCES programs also include high cost programs such as special classes for handicapped children and shared administrative services such as electronic data processing. A BOCES may also provide part-time educational services on a cooperative basis to school districts too small to employ full-time school nurses, dental hygienists, psychologists, guidance counselors, attendance supervisors and supervisors of teachers, as well as teachers of art, music and physical education.

The BOCES system has been successful where it has developed, but it has not developed evenly throughout the State. This is particularly true in special education programs. If the program were made financially independent, it could overcome the problems which have kept it from developing in certain areas.

Cities with a population of more than 125,000 are excluded from the BOCES system. The State's major metropolitan areas are prevented from developing -- through BOCES -- regional responses to regional needs in education. The potential in BOCES for meeting metropolitan needs can be seen in the extensive development of BOCES in such highly urbanized counties as Erie, Monroe and Nassau. The BOCES system could be made more effective in meeting today's needs by modifying its structure to include the major cities of the state's metropolitan areas.

The apportionment system now in effect for BOCES funds should also be changed. Wealthy districts, because of their lower state aid ratios, gain more financial benefit from taking advantage of the higher level of BOCES aid than do poorer districts. Consequently, BOCES programs have developed more extensively in the wealthier districts.

BOCES are also limited by a lack of planning support, although this may be overcome to some extent by the incorporation of the Title III Regional Education Centers into the BOCES system as planning offices. The centers, funded until 1972 under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, were aimed at innovation and development in education. Many of the centers were criticized for being too

far removed from school programs to be effective. An assessment should be made of the effectiveness of these centers now that they are working more closely with the BOCES. Limitations in planning have inhibited the ability of the BOCES to adjust its programs to meet changing needs. BOCES programs should be able to respond quickly, for example, to changes in regional job trends.

District Superintendents

District superintendents, the key figures in the BOCES, are typically highly experienced school administrators. But they are burdened with a complex set of responsibilities which contains built-in conflicts. Although they are selected locally by the BOCES boards, their position is that of a State official, representing the Commissioner of Education in their supervisory districts. Since 1971, their selection is subject to the approval of the Commissioner. As district superintendents, they are also executive officers of Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). In this position, a district superintendent is responsible to a board which represents the component school districts of the BOCES. As State officials, they supervise local districts; as BOCES executives, they serve local districts.

Further complicating the job of the district superintendent is the fact that the membership of the BOCES, which selects him, is different from that of the supervisory district, in which he is chief school administrator. As superintendent, he is fully responsible only for the common and small central districts. But the BOCES includes independent superintendencies and city school districts as well as the smaller school districts. The conflicting functions and jurisdictions which combine to form the job of the district superintendent prevent these extremely able men from being fully effective.

BOCES and Pupil Placement

In some areas, because of the present financing methods, the decision on whether to place a child in a BOCES program or a local program is sometimes made not on the basis of what the child needs, but on the basis of what the local district can afford. Many children who ought to be sent to special BOCES programs are assigned instead to a non-regents course in the local district, where they simply mark time until they become either "drop-outs" or "pass-outs." A "pass-out" is a child who gets a diploma without having met any standard of achievement.

Building on Experience

The successes of BOCES, despite its patchwork admini-

strative structure, show the possibilities of providing certain educational programs and services through a regional agency. What is required at this point is to take what we have learned of the potential of a BOCES-like structure and what we have learned about the limitations of that structure and then change it to meet today's needs.

Overcentralization

The growth of the education system in New York State has led to a high degree of centralization at the Albany level. Communication between the State Education Department, responsible for supervising all education in the State, and the many local school districts and BOCES is difficult. The staff at the Albany level is unable to respond quickly to the great number of inquiries from local districts and BOCES; examples of this difficulty are questions on teacher certification and inquiries during the Phase I national salary freeze in 1971.

The department staff grew sharply during the 1960's as a result of the increased flow of federal funds for education. But despite this growth, the staff remained centralized in Albany. There should be a better balance between centralization and de-centralization. Those functions of the State Education Department which do not have to be handled from the central office should be decentralized to regional offices.

The Laverne Proposal: Two Independent Tiers and Decentralized Department of Education

The Laverne Proposal recommends: (1) the adoption of a two-tiered operational system for elementary and secondary education, and (2) decentralization of the State Education Department into regional offices. See Figure 2.

Each regional office of the department would support and advise the two operational tiers. These offices would not, however, exercise control. Both the local and regional operational districts would be governed by their own boards.

The role of each operational tier would be designed to complement what is done by the other. Programs which can be handled best at the local level would be assigned to Tier One. Those which can be carried out more economically or more effectively on a multi-district basis would be assigned to Tier Two.

Although these two tiers would be financially independent, the success of their programs would depend on an active flow of informal communication between the two tiers. A clearer definition of responsibilities would minimize the competition

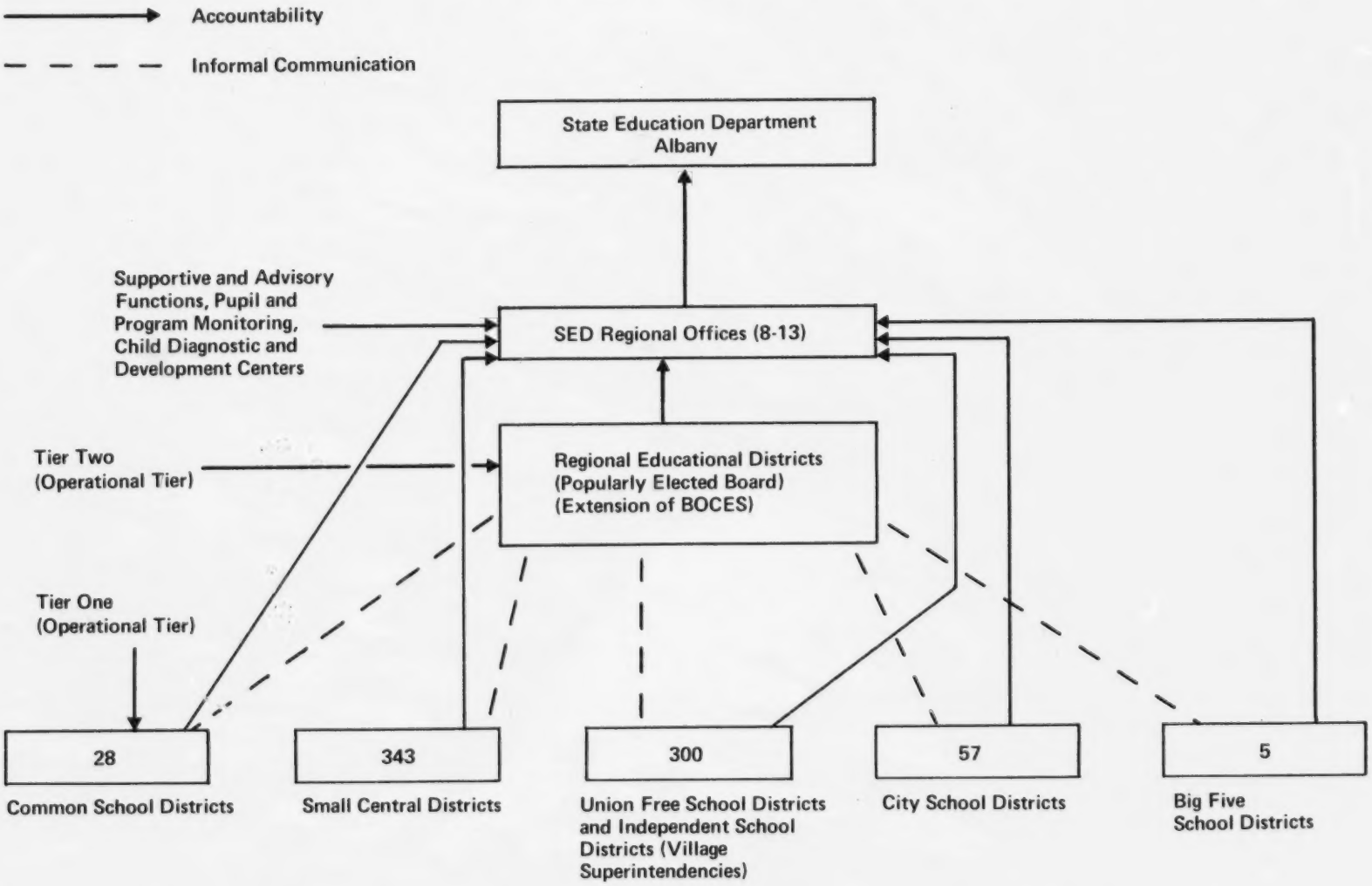

Figure 2. Laverne Proposal: 1. Regional and Local Districts accountable to Regional SED Offices.
2. Dual Role of District Superintendent eliminated.
3. Two Operational Tiers, each governed by Elected Boards.

which sometimes appears in the present system. The regional offices of the State Education Department would support the work of the two operational tiers. The regional offices would act as referees in the placement of children in the programs of one tier or the other.

Tier One

The first tier of the proposed system is made up of local school districts. The only change proposed in the role of the existing school districts is to relieve them of the burden of providing occupational, vocational and special educational programs, the kinds of programs which they now provide either within their own systems or through the BOCES. These functions would be assigned directly to the second tier. This would enable school boards, teachers and parents to focus their resources on improving the educational programs for children in Tier One.

Per-pupil cost to the local school district would be the same whether a pupil is assigned to Tier One or Tier Two. If there is still a local share for basic public education, the local district would transfer this amount to Tier Two when a pupil is assigned there. Financial pressure will be removed from placement decisions.

Two contributions which structural reform must bring to local districts are flexibility in curriculum and access to all the local and regional resources needed to improve education. The most important change needed in the educational system, the change which must stand as an overriding concern, is an improvement in what the schools do for children. The local community -- PTA's, representatives of special resources, teachers, children -- must be involved in the creation of this change. If this involvement is to be meaningful, program decisions must be made possible at the local level. The proposed decentralization is aimed at increasing both flexibility and access to resources through the support available from regional S.E.D. offices.

Tier Two

The second tier of the proposed system would be a system of Regional Educational Districts built on the existing BOCES system. This regional system would be financed by State funds; it would not be dependent on contracts with local school districts. If State financing is to be phased in gradually, it should start with total financing of the second tier. Actually, many of the programs assigned to this tier would be eligible for Federal funds.

This tier would be given its own mission: (1) specific responsibility for the kinds of occupational, vocational and special educational programs and shared services now operated by BOCES and (2) responsibility for administering specialized regional schools. The BOCES would become Regional Educational Districts, bearing responsibility for the total child when a student is assigned to them. These districts would be governed, as local school districts are, by popularly-elected boards. The boards would be responsible for developing, with parent-teacher participation, programs to meet the special needs of the children attending Tier Two.

The large cities now excluded from BOCES would be included in Regional Educational Districts, to make regional action possible in the state's major metropolitan areas. In the event that a "shared time" arrangement with private schools were adopted, the proposed second tier would provide a ready-made framework for putting such an arrangement into practice.

There is no question that the present BOCES structure fills a well-recognized need. Special educational programs now provided by BOCES under contract may well be expanded, particularly in occupational education and in programs for handicapped children (Article 89 of Education Law). Test cases are being brought in various state courts to require more training for the handicapped. Pennsylvania was recently enjoined from denying any mentally retarded child the same access to free public education given to other exceptional children.

But, if the second tier of the educational system is to develop evenly, to its full potential, throughout the state, it must be separated from financial dependence on local school districts. This financial dependence has prevented the BOCES from developing where local school districts, often for financial reasons, have not promoted its development. Some district superintendents now have very little to supervise, while others are managing very sophisticated BOCES programs. This variation depends not so much on the individual district superintendent, as it does on the kinds of school districts in his area.

The BOCES do not now have a clearly defined mission. The extent of the program offered by a BOCES depends on what local school districts decide they want. These decisions too often have to be made on the basis of what is cheaper rather than what children need. The need to balance a budget can require a decision to sponsor a babysitting operation in the local school district rather than to contract with the BOCES for a worthwhile program. The system proposed here would eliminate the pressure for these kinds of decisions.

The board elected by the people of a Regional Educational District would control the district's educational activities. Local school districts would have either individual or shared representation to accommodate as closely as possible the one-man, one-vote rule. Regional Educational Districts would have the independence and the financial resources necessary to accomplish their mission. Regional programs would no longer be hampered by the fiscal problems of local districts. If the State take-over of educational finance is to be gradual, the regional operational tier would provide a logical first step for relieving the financial plight of local districts. But neither this tier nor the local tier for basic education can be fully successful unless the supporting staff of the State Education Department is arrayed more effectively.

Regional Offices of the State Education Department

The State Education Department would be decentralized by creating a network of regional offices throughout the State. This would be a deliberate attempt to reduce the excessive centralization of the educational bureaucracy in Albany. A decentralized support structure, organized into regional offices, could be more closely tied to the local and regional operational districts. These closer ties, however, would be supportive; they would not involve control by the regional offices of the department. Both the local districts and the regional districts would enjoy the independence which local districts now have.

Decentralization would not necessarily require additional personnel for existing functions. Many members of the head-quarters staff could be transferred to regional offices, as well as many of the professionals giving special services in local school districts and in BOCES. Nor would the regional staff have to be located in a centralized regional office. Administrative decisions could locate staff professionals wherever they could most effectively provide their services. Only those persons on the department staff who are involved in the general central functions of the department would stay in Albany. Additional personnel may be needed for the proposed new functions of child guidance and pupil-program monitoring, described more fully below.

Generally, the functions which would be decentralized are those related to advisory, supportive and coordinating respon-sibilities. The separation of functions described here is based on an analysis of departmental functions, distinguishing those which could be carried out better at the regional level. This analysis was developed in a memorandum prepared for the Committee Chairman by Craig M. Smith, director of the Rochester Center for Governmental and Community Research.[1]

General central functions would still be retained in Albany; educational policy responsibilities relating to the

Legislature and the Board of Regents, general supervision of performance, the setting of general standards for staff, central reporting and fiscal administration, allocation of Federal funds, overall coordination of Federal programs and broad policy planning and evaluation. Many of the specialized resources of the State Education Department would be retained at the central office to back up the regional offices.

A clearly defined set of State responsibilities would be centered in each regional office. Coordination would be achieved through closer communication with school districts and through a variety of regional advisory councils. These councils would be made up of local administrators, educators, planners and community leaders. A functional classification of those State responsibilities in public education which can best be conducted through a regional field office is given in Table 1. Although this list of responsibilities appears imposing, it should be noted that these are not direct operational functions. They are advisory, supportive and coordinating responsibilities.

Services would be rendered by the staff in the regional offices more directly and more efficiently than they are now provided from the central office. The department now attempts to serve from its Albany headquarters the multitudes of administrators and professional staff from the State's public school districts, from the BOCES and from the many individual public, private and parochial schools throughout the state. Shorter distances would make communications easier. Easier access to the department's resources would mean that local districts would no longer have to provide for themselves in such areas as specialized technologies in both educational and administrative functions.

Concern for the Pupil: Monitoring Pupil Progress

The most important State concern which can be achieved best by a well-designed regional approach is concern for the individual pupil. In decisions on how to provide each student with the most suitable type of education for his or her capabilities, local districts are too strongly pressured by cost and space factors. Those who make placement decisions do not always have sufficient information on available programs.

Placing this responsibility in the proposed regional offices of the department, would eliminate the pressure of local school budgets. Regional offices would be given the resources to assist effectively in the placement function. These offices would be well acquainted with the resources of their regions. Through computerized records, they would be able to follow the performance of students and of schools in their region. Parents and teachers, in carrying out their responsibilities toward children, would be given a new resource to help them in finding the right program

Table 1. Functional Responsibilities Proposed for Regional Offices of the New York State Department of Education (developed in a paper prepared for Senator Laverne by Craig M. Smith, director, Rochester Center for Governmental and Community Research, Inc., *Memorandum on the Subject of State and Local Responsibilities for Regionalism in Public Education in New York State*, September 14, 1971, pp.24-25.)

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Director of State Regional Office
Communications between staff/Albany/school districts and educational agencies
Policy dissemination
Establishment of advisory councils
Coordination of regional education resources
General review, evaluation and supervision of regional education administration
Planning for regional education needs

PUPIL DEVELOPMENT

Child diagnostic and development centers
Pupil placement
Evaluation of pupil progress
Physical and mental health services

PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

In-service training programs, workshops, conferences
Teacher certification
Supervision for tenure/differentiated staffing
Negotiation

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Elementary and secondary education curriculum coordination
Innovation, research and demonstration
Education technology
Program evaluation and testing
Occupational and continuing education
Special educational programs for gifted and handicapped

COORDINATION WITH MANPOWER PLANNING

Business and industrial employment coordination
Planning and coordinating Federal and State programs in region
Employment counselling coordination
Coordination of occupational and continuing education
Migrant labor education coordination

COORDINATION OF REGIONAL RESOURCES

Private and Parochial school services
Coordination of higher education programs with public schools
Development of programs with: Libraries
Museums and Science Centers
Arts and cultural organizations
Coordination of regional education resources with State and public institutions' educational requirements
Coordination of educational planning with comprehensive regional, county and municipal master planning

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Finance, State and Federal aid services
Legal counsel
Facilities planning
Data processing
Administrative technologies
Textbook and library services
Transportation planning
Food services

for each child.

The regional offices of the State Education Department should be equipped to take full advantage of the most advanced techniques for diagnosing the educational needs of children. Special care should be taken, however, to qualify, according to the reliability of the measures used, all diagnoses of pupil potential and of learning problems. Diagnosis of "potential" presents many technical problems. In the past, such diagnoses of potential have sometimes been used to cover up failures on the part of schools. Separating this diagnostic function from operational school districts, by placing Child Diagnostic and Development Centers under regional offices, would remove a major bias in diagnosis. The centers would be responsible for all children, those in the private schools as well as those in the public schools.

A record would be kept on each child, starting with data from a complete physical examination at age three. This examination could be done either privately or in a public clinic. In either case, it would be done according to specifications which would meet the requirements of the monitoring system. Tests similar to the initial examination would be administered at periodic intervals. The progress of each student would be matched with the results of these tests. These records, stored in a computer, would be designed to help psychological and guidance personnel in spotting learning problems. Once a problem is identified, steps would quickly be taken to study the problem and -- in close cooperation with the student, parents and teachers -- to discover the best remedial action.

This computerized monitoring system, which would probably take several years to design and install, would also provide a basis for evaluating the performance of schools. The State Education Department has already taken some steps in this area with its "Project SPPED" (System for Pupil and Program Evaluation and Development.) The computer system would not replace the professional. It would serve this person, as well as parents and teachers, as a tool in carrying out the important personal responsibility of identifying and analyzing children's problems, and of finding the best available solution.

The State must improve its testing and evaluation procedures so that it can measure as accurately as possible individual pupil potential and progress. The State should ensure that each student is given the opportunity for achieving his potential educational development. The concept of a zero rejection rate within the educational system and a suitable program for each pupil will undoubtedly become more and more a social and legal responsibility.

Concern for the Handicapped Pupil

Existing State programs for handicapped children could be improved exponentially through the establishment of adequately-staffed regional Child Diagnostic and Development Centers. The education of handicapped children is now provided under Article 89 of the Education Law. The two most frequently used sections of this article are Section 4403 and Section 4407.

Section 4403 directs family courts to order, subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Education, that educational assistance be provided by the State for a handicapped child whose education is not otherwise provided for. The court's decision is based on a letter of recommendation from the local Superintendent of Schools. Half the cost of these court-ordered programs is charged against the city or county where the child lives; the other half is covered by State funds. The effectiveness of Section 4403 varies according to individual family courts and individual school superintendents. Application of this section could be made more consistently effective if placement were made the responsibility of regional diagnostic centers.

Section 4407, poorly designed and very costly (currently $13.6 million per year), is the program most in need of improvement. The section authorizes the State Education Department to contract with any educational facility in-state or out-of-state, for the education of a handicapped child whose needs cannot be met at any public facility within the state. The department may spend up to $2,000 a year (an outdated figure adopted more than a decade ago) for each pupil in this situation.

The design of this program encourages school districts to abdicate their responsibility to children. Whenever possible, children who are handicapped should attend local schools. Section 4407, however, supplies an attractive excuse to school personnel to send problem children out of their school districts. There is no guarantee that a child is in fact given an effective program. Nor is there adequate provision for remedial action in cases where programs are ineffective. While some schools with Section 4407 children are outstanding (some have been visited by the Committee staff), many are suspected of being ineffective.

Programs funded under Section 4407 are not adequately supervised. The department is supposed to inspect the schools to which these children are sent. Approximately 6,800 children took part in the program in the 1971-72 school year. The figure projected for 1972-1973 is 7,500 -- at an estimated cost of $15 million. The number is increasing because more and more children are being identified as handicapped.

Of the 212 schools involved in the 4407 program, 154 are in New York and 58 are in other states. Eighty-five of these schools are residential, including all but two of the out-of-state schools. Inspections by the department are limited because of a shortage of funds and staff. Since 1971, department representatives have been visiting about 65 New York schools a year. Any school in the state which joins the 4407 program is visited before being approved. Because it is difficult for the staff to get funds for out-of-state travel, none of the program's 58 out-of-state schools (which are responsible for 350 New York State children) are visited. Approval of these schools is based on information from the education departments of the states where they are located.

With adequate precautions, better programs could be provided--possibly at a lower cost. Reform should be carefully designed, using the best information available on education for handicapped children. This would include knowledge of the latest developments in:

*the Handicapped Children's Education Project (HACHE) of the Education Commission of the States,

*an 18-month federally-funded project headed by Dr. Nicholas Hobbs, Provost of Vanderbilt University to study (1) theories on testing and (2) the role of the states in providing services for handicapped children; and to make policy recommendations on (1) the technical adequacy of diagnostic and classification systems, (2) the effects of labeling on individual children, and (3) the social, legal and ethical implications of labeling children.

Evaluating Schools

One of the greatest difficulties now in trying to evaluate the performance of a school district or a school is the fact that the existing evaluation is self-evaluation. Most of it is based on an artificial standard of Regents exam scores or Regent scholarship performance. These test results have no real meaning. The evaluation needed can only be obtained from an analysis of the kind of data which the proposed computerized monitoring system would provide. Such an analysis would make it possible, within the limits of the system's reliability, to determine what kind of children are in a school, and to evaluate what the school is doing for the children. This evaluation should be performed by a third party rather than by those operating educational programs. Evaluation would be a regional function.

Untangling Communications

Department heads, superintendents and principals of public and private schools now depend for information on memos, individual calls or trips to and from specialists' offices in Albany. At times, they depend on partial information or hearsay for their interpretation of State standards, goals and requirements.

Communication through regional offices could increase the availability of the rich and varied resources of the Education Department and other State agencies to the local districts in each region. It could encourage freedom and flexibility in matters where they are now allowed, but where they are not often utilized because of communication failures. Moving the State advisory and supportive functions into the region could also create a beneficial two-way communication pattern, which could improve the participation of local educators and school representatives in State-level policy making.

Regional Bargaining

One result of the proposed State takeover of school finance would be regional or statewide bargaining for teachers. While bargaining at a level higher than the local district would still produce some differentials based on cost of living, it would generally equalize teachers' salaries and benefits throughout the state. In entering into the bargaining field, many school districts have had problems which they were not really equipped to handle. Salary negotiations could be made a function of regional offices, where negotiating expertise could be developed, and where the "economic whipsaw" which now victimizes local districts could be avoided.

The Regions

The definition of the department's regions is an important matter. It is not clear yet, however, just how they should be defined. They could follow the lines of the 11 economic regions defined by the Office of Planning Coordination, before that agency became part of the Office of Planning Services. These regions were designated by the Governor as official state comprehensive planning and development regions. Proposals which would subdivide the region which includes New York City into several regions have great merits. See Figure 3. Many educational decisions should be related to the economics of a region, especially decisions which relate to manpower training. There are also good reasons for having the department's regions correspond with the eight regions, grouped into four major coordinating areas, set up in the recent decentralization of the State University of New York. See Figure 4. The department's regional offices should coordinate with the regional offices concerned with higher education. The definition of region should also be designed to take advantage of regional systems now being developed by the department for libraries, museums and special education instruction materials.

New York City

In the present system of school governance under the decentralization statute in New York City (see Figure 5), the Central Board of Education, a five-man board, is appointed by borough presidents. Its central professional staff is headed by the Chancellor. The central agency has jurisdiction over all matters not specifically delegated to community boards. Community boards operate the elementary schools. Special programs and the high schools are administered by the central agency. The central agency is responsible for producing a budget allocating funds to individual school districts. This budget is acted on by the mayor, the Board of Estimates and the City Council.

Under the Laverne Proposal, New York City could be considered a region, with its regional office headed by either a chancellor or a Board of Education. Each of the five boroughs could constitute a Regional Educational District. The City's local school districts would have responsibilities similar to those in the rest of the state.

Some of the central Board's responsibility could be decentralized to Tier Two, the Regional Educational Districts. The supervision of high schools could be assigned to the Regional Educational Districts. Special education would also be the responsibility of this second tier. The local boards could then focus their resources on their responsibility for basic education.

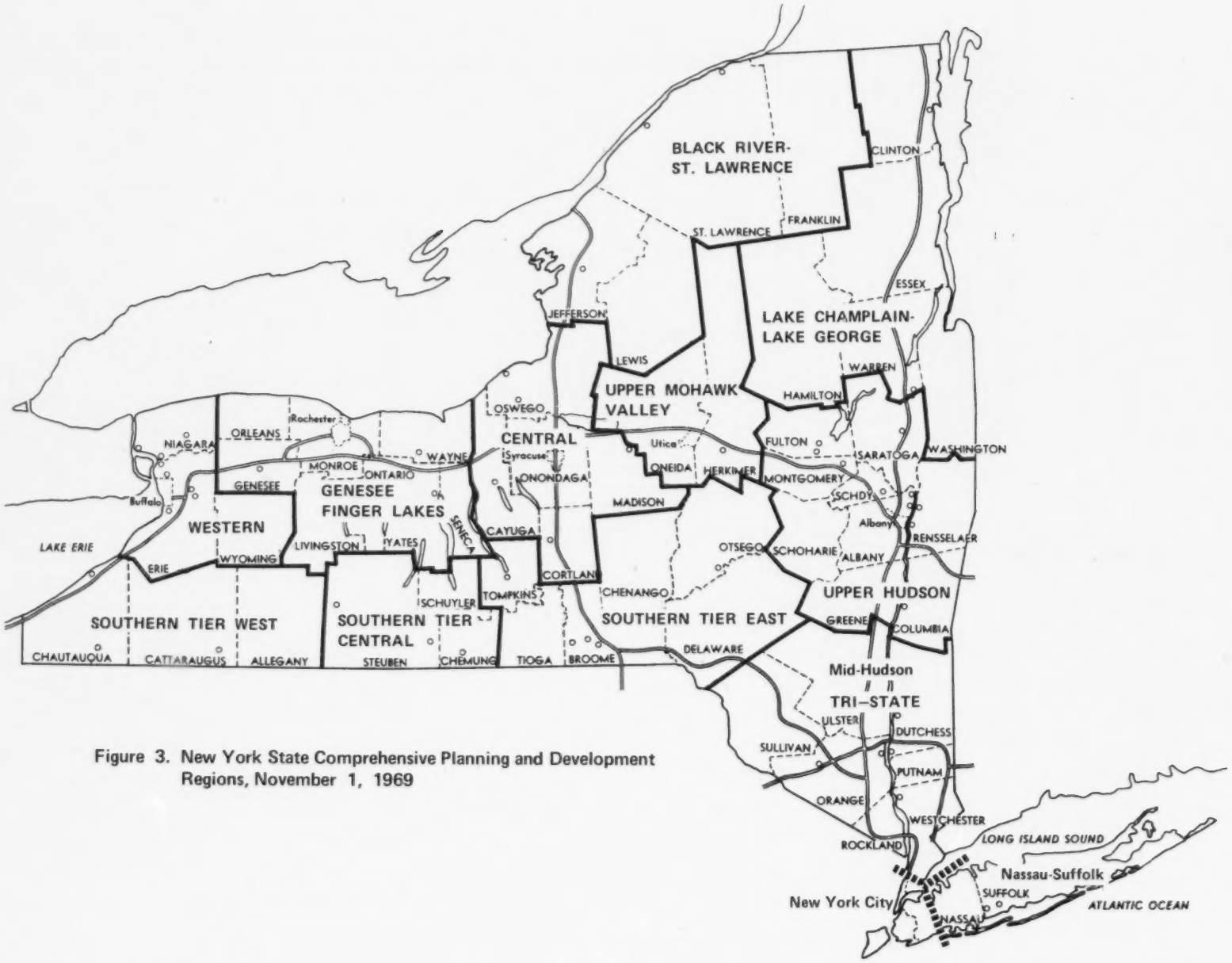

Figure 3. New York State Comprehensive Planning and Development Regions, November 1, 1969

REGIONS OF THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

- ■ University Centers
- ● Medical Centers
- ▲ Colleges of Arts and Sciences
- □ Specialized Colleges
- ○ Two-Year Agricultural and Technical Colleges
- △ Two-Year Community Colleges now conducting classes

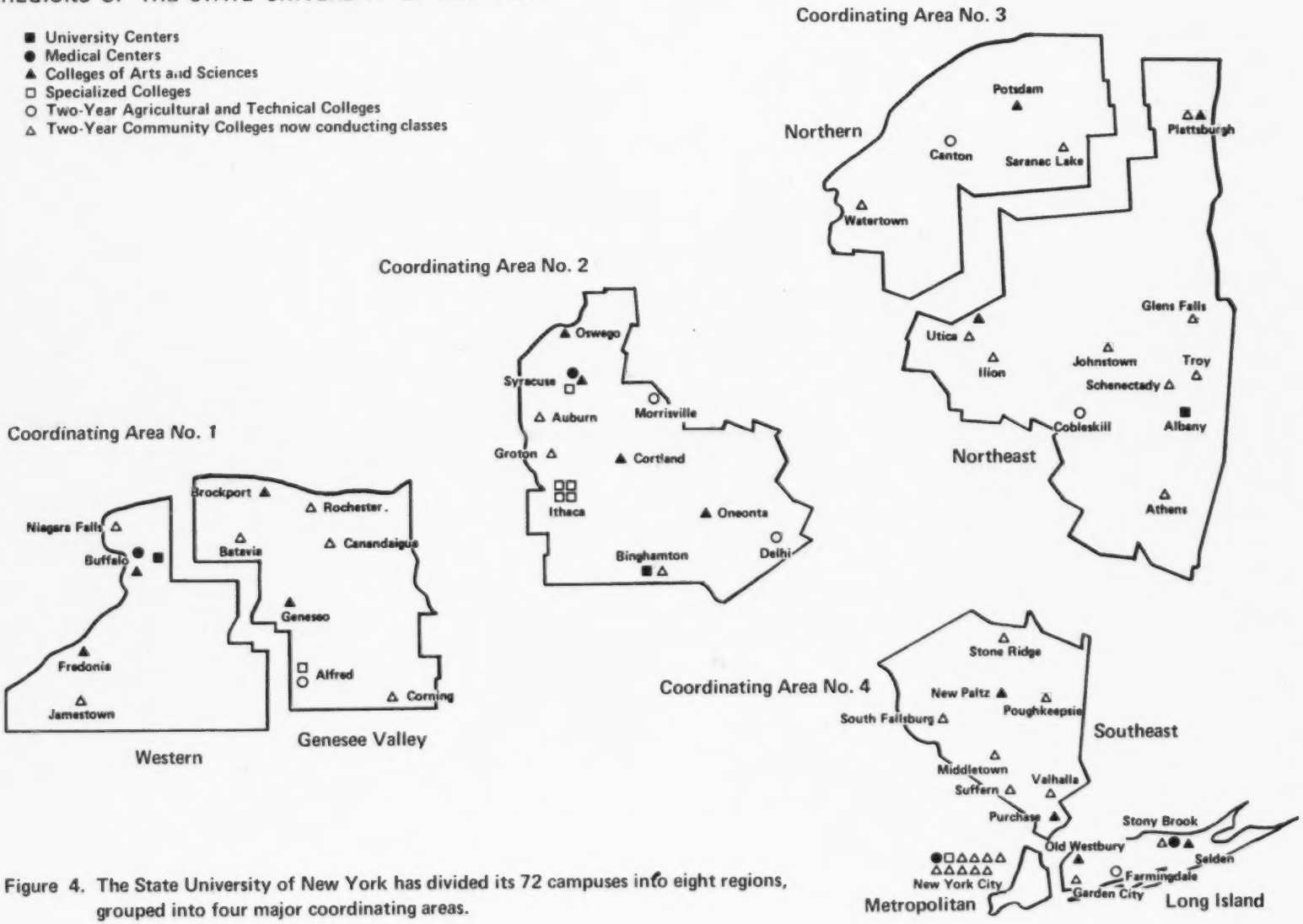

Figure 4. The State University of New York has divided its 72 campuses into eight regions, grouped into four major coordinating areas.

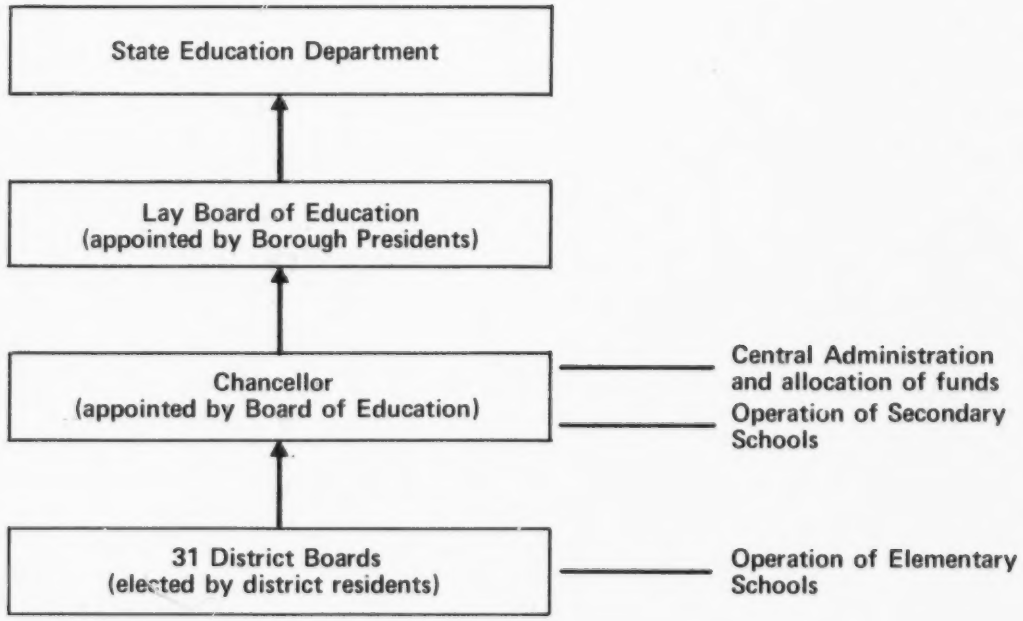

Figure 5. Present System in New York City:
1. Central Board of Education is responsible for running high schools.
2. District Boards are responsible for elementary schools.
3. Central Board is responsible for overall budget.

(See discussion of Regents' Proposal on New York City, below,)

Other Institutional Education

This proposal views the State responsibility in education as being much broader than the public school system. In carrying out this broad responsibility, the department should actively involve the resources and participation of centers of higher education, private and parochial schools, libraries, educational television and other media, arts, cultural and scientific organizations within each region, as well as local and State social service and health resources.

One of the truly tragic results of the lack of coordination in the State's educational activities is the attempt to operate educational programs in the mental health and correctional systems without the help of the expertise available in the Department of Education. Although the work of these programs is extremely important, both for the individuals concerned and for society, their effectiveness is uneven. (County jails, in fact, usually do not even attempt to provide educational programs.) Resources which could improve these programs exist in the department, but they are not used.

It is not being suggested here that the operating responsibility be changed. The change which is suggested is that the State Education Department give these programs the supervision, supportive guidance and other services which the department can supply very well. The Connecticut technique of making correctional institutions school districts could be adopted, with the support which would be available under the proposed restructuring. This is now done in New York for orphanages. (See Chapter 566 of the Laws of 1967.)

Regional Focus for Education

While this paper classifies the types of department activities which should be conducted in the regions, it does not attempt to spell out in detail the number and kind of personnel required. It does recognize, however, that many of the personnel located in Albany could operate more effectively in the field through regional offices. At the same time, direct provision of specialized and technical services such as facilities planning, legal counseling, transportation planning and data processing, would substantially reduce the need for duplicating these specialities within each of the numerous schools and school districts.

In many areas, regional education offices would provide a focus for existing State or regional resources. Agencies outside public elementary and secondary education--private schools, colleges and universities, arts and cultural organizations,

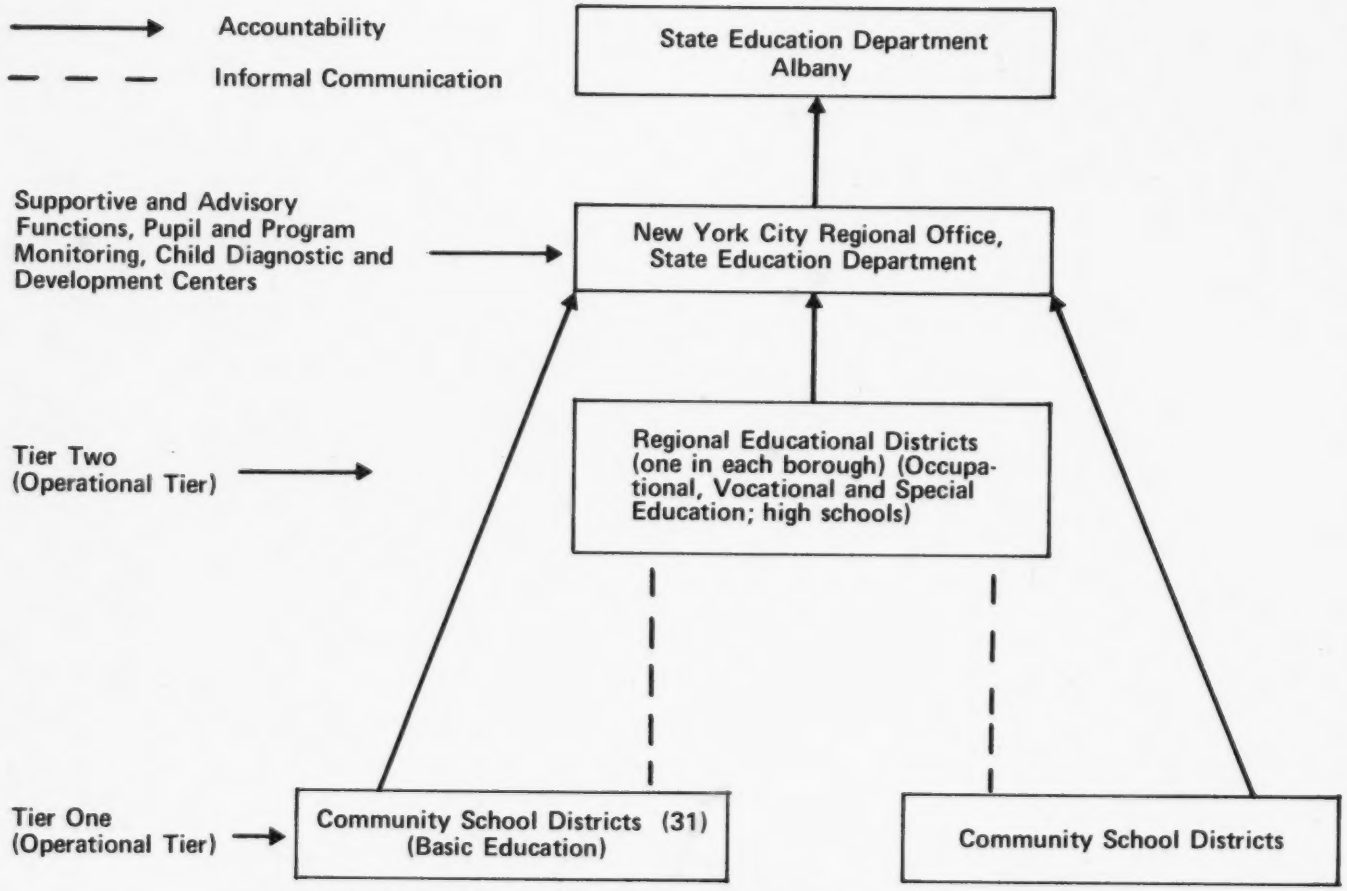

Figure 6. New York City, under the Laverne Proposal;

1. The City would be considered a region.
2. Each borough would be covered by a Regional Educational District responsible for vocational and special education and for high schools.
3. Community districts would have powers comparable to other local districts.
4. Presently diffuse accountability would be clarified.

libraries and museums--could form an "Advisory Committee of Educational Agencies" to work with the State Education Department Regional Office in planning their contribution to public education.

Development of in-service training programs for teachers--in fact for all types of school personnel--could be accomplished more adequately and less expensively by regional approaches. Educational television and other education technologies could be made more accessible. If demonstration programs were regionally based, they could be used in training and research by each region's professional staff. An effective liaison with all of a region's higher education institutions--including community colleges, private colleges and universities and the State University--would give demonstration programs access to specialized skills in evaluation and teaching. Research and evaluation could be tied together at the regional level, so that all available regional resources could be drawn on more effectively. Access to these resources now depends on scattered and sporadic approaches.

Curriculum development could benefit from a regional approach. The regional office could provide a forum for local participation by teachers, department heads, and other professionals in the region. This would help to bridge the gap between the creation of central policy and its application in local practice.

The regional office, its activities and resources, could make a major contribution to the comprehensive regional planning process. A comprehensive development plan could relate educational needs and plans to all the other needs of a region. Regional health needs are far better articulated through a regional planning structure than are regional education needs in the absence of such a structure. Educational planning still depends on completely fragmented data. Information comes not only from separate and independent school districts, but also from the isolated efforts of different types of educational agencies and institutions.

The proposal developed here attempts to take full advantage of the expected changes in school finance. A proposal which starts from a different assumption, that there will be no substantial change in the method of school finance, was developed by a Task Force on Regionalism set up by the New York State Board of Regents.

Regents Task Force Proposal

The regional approach proposed by the New York State Regents Task Force on Regionalism, aimed at generating adaptability and flexibility in the educational system, would build on the BOCES. But unlike the Laverne Proposal, it would not change the basic BOCES structure. The BOCES would still be financially dependent on local school districts.

The BOCES, described by the Task Force as the "intermediate level," would continue to be the basic unit for regional development.[2] The BOCES could broaden their service base through contracts with other BOCES to form "multi-BOCES arrangements." Regions under this plan would consequently be patchwork structures. See Figure 7.

The Task Force proposes that the BOCES and the District Superintendents be given greater responsibility for improving communication between school districts and the Education Department. But the Task Force does not make it clear just how this responsibility would be increased. To gain the benefits of decentralization, many of the functions assigned in the Laverne Proposal to regional offices of the State Education Department would be assigned in the Task Force plan to the BOCES.

BOCES Functions

The BOCES and the District Superintendent would have four main functions, those of:

1. Regional Coordinating and Development Agencies, to coordinate the work of the school system with other public and private agencies.

2. Educational Change Agents, to serve as the focus for human and material resources of the State Education Department in planning for educational change, coordinating demonstration programs and disseminating new developments.

3. Field Extension Units of the State Education Department, exercising those decision-making and regulatory functions of the department which can be decentralized to the intermediate level. The beginning of this process is already seen in the pilot transfers of the responsibility for teacher certification to some District Superintendents, according to the report. But no other specific regulatory functions are suggested for decentralization.

4. Service Agencies, providing services which "would be (a) feasible only on multi-district basis, (b) more economical and efficient than on a smaller basis, (c) of higher quality when conducted collaboratively, or (d) more effective if decentralized from State Education Department operation."[3] Regional relationships for services "should be developed among Cooperative Boards rather than by developing new geographical configurations or new organizational units."[4] Services would include:

- evaluation and planning;
- specialized consultative and technical assistance for administration;
- supporting instructional services; and,
- special instructional services.

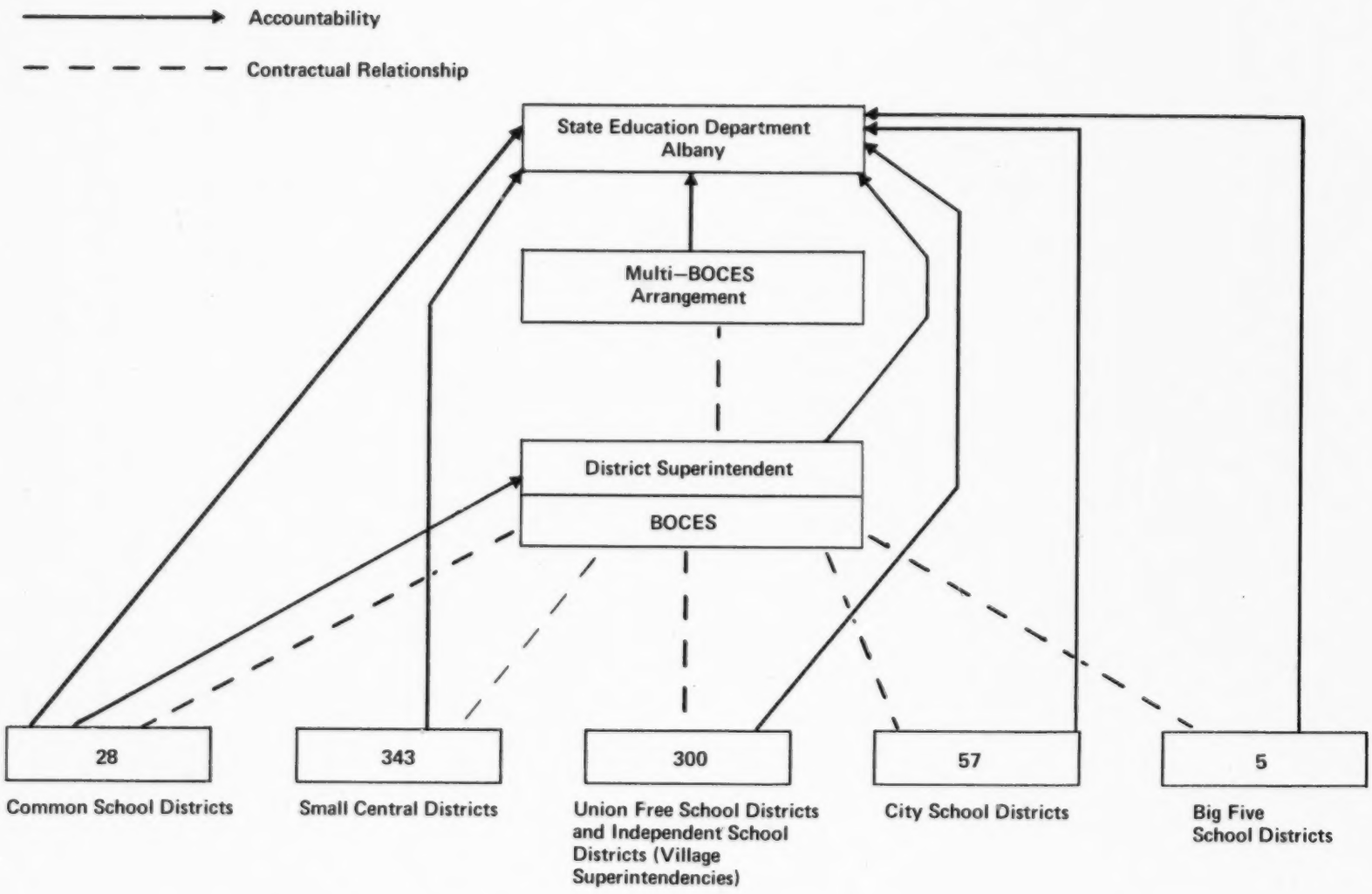

Figure 7. Regents Task Force Proposal: 1. Accountability still fragmented.
2. District Superintendent given third role,
3. Multi–BOCES Consortium would be added to BOCES.

Opening the BOCES to Large Cities

To enable the intermediate level to assume the broad role outlined for it by the Task Force, the Task Force proposes that cities over 125,000 except New York City be authorized to take part in the BOCES program. For other school districts, it is proposed that participation in BOCES be made mandatory by a certain date. It also proposes that the authority of the District Superintendent be vested in the School Superintendency of the cities of Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers, and that further responsibilities be delegated to the District Superintendent "as the need arises and circumstances demand."[5]

Decision-Making

For the "service agency" role, the decision-making pattern of the existing BOCES would be continued under the Task Force proposal:

> School districts decide which services are to be requested; the Commissioner approves the annual program of services; the Cooperative Board is responsible for operational policy; the District Superintendent is the responsible executive officer and undertakes to survey needs and to encourage coordination among districts.[6]

The same principles would apply to services which are given over an area which includes two or more Cooperative Boards. The executive role would be carried out by a Management Team, "consisting of the District Superintendents of the region, Superintendent of a city of over 125,000 (if in the region), plus the superintendents of other major districts (as defined in each region)."[7] The Management Team would be assisted by broadly representative Advisory Teams and by Review Panels of representatives of BOCES boards.

"Change Agent" activities could originate from within a region, from the Department or from the Legislature. Decisions on decentralizing State functions would remain entirely at the State level.

Criticism of Regents Task Force Proposal

The regionalism proposal of the Regents Task Force, while attempting to prescribe a solution, would actually create a number of problems:

1. greater conflict in the district superintendent's role,
2. the possibility of greater centralization,
3. a cumbersome management design, and
4. further entanglement of the communication problem.

Conflict in District Superintendent's Role

The Regents Task Force proposal would continue to combine

conflicting responsibilities in the role of the district superintendent. This combination of responsibilities would continue to make district superintendents accountable in two directions: to local districts and to the State Education Department. To this combination, a third relationship would be added, a contractual relationship with a "multi-BOCES arrangement."

More Centralization Possible

Under this plan, the State would be incorporating the BOCES level, or second-tier level, of local administration into its own regional supervisory system. This second tier would be able to assume greater responsibility for administering local education programs with the help of both BOCES-type fiscal incentives and the concentration of the department's technological resources. Such an approach could, as the memorandum of the Rochester Center for Governmental and Community Research notes, [8] lead to a more complete State assumption of educational administration. The independence of local districts and their ability to influence the proposed administrative structure would depend on how contracts are developed and on the extent of local lay advisory representation in the planning and development process. There is a danger that expediency may produce pressure to exclude key participants from the planning process.

"Management Team" Design Faulty

The "management team" proposed for multi-BOCES arrangements is a cumbersome instrument for carrying out executive responsibilities. Earlier in this paper, Table 1 lists a number of State responsibilities which could be decentralized to the regional level. "It is almost inconceivable...that all or even a major part of these responsibilities could be adequately supervised and administered by a management team"[9] of local BOCES superintendents, joined by a city superintendent in certain cases, at the same time that these superintendents are carrying out their local responsibilities. For the most part, the State functions and responsibilities described in Table 1 as appropriate for regional decentralization would probably, under the Task Force plan, continue to be centralized in Albany.

Communication Problem Unsolved

The Regents Task Force plan would still leave largely unsolved the communication problem caused by Albany's need to communicate with local districts, superintendencies and BOCES boards. The "multi-BOCES arrangements" would further complicate the communications network. The plan would also scatter technical personnel in BOCES offices. This would both hamper centralized direction and weaken local participation in the planning and implementation of regional programs.

New York City: Regents Proposal

The Regents, in a statement released October 29, 1971,[10] proposed replacing the present five-man central board of education and the Chancellor of the City school district with a Commissioner of Education appointed by the mayor. (See Figure 8). The Regents proposal would give this Commissioner the statutory powers and duties now assigned to the board and the Chancellor. He would have the same relationship as the board and Chancellor now have with community districts and the State Education Department.

The Regents maintained that an elected board in New York City would not be able to perform the traditional functions of a board of education. If the board members were unpaid, "only persons of means or leisure," [11] would be able to serve. Such persons would not be representative of the population at large. If the board members were paid, the Regents said, it would inevitably build up its own staff and take on administrative responsibilities, in competition with the chief executive officer, the Chancellor. The present board is in fact criticized for involving itself too much in routine administrative matters. (The SED estimates the annual cost of the central board at $1.4 million).

The Regents said that the Commissioner should be appointed by the mayor so that he would have the necessary strength to run the city's decentralized school system and so that responsibility for the central authority's performance would be related, through the mayor, to the people of the city.

This arrangement was seen as contributing also to harnessing the resources of the city for the benefit of the school system.

> This can be achieved if the education system is headed by a commissioner of education who, as a member of a single official family, works side by side with the Departments of Correction, Health, Police, Parks, Welfare and all the other municipal agencies, which through unified effort, can most effectively utilize the vast non-school resources for the benefit of the children. On the other hand, this harnessing of resources in New York City cannot be accomplished by a central agency separated from other municipal agencies.[12]

To take full advantage of all of the city's available resources, the Regents suggested advisory councils on particular problems as well as an advisory council made up of representatives of community boards.

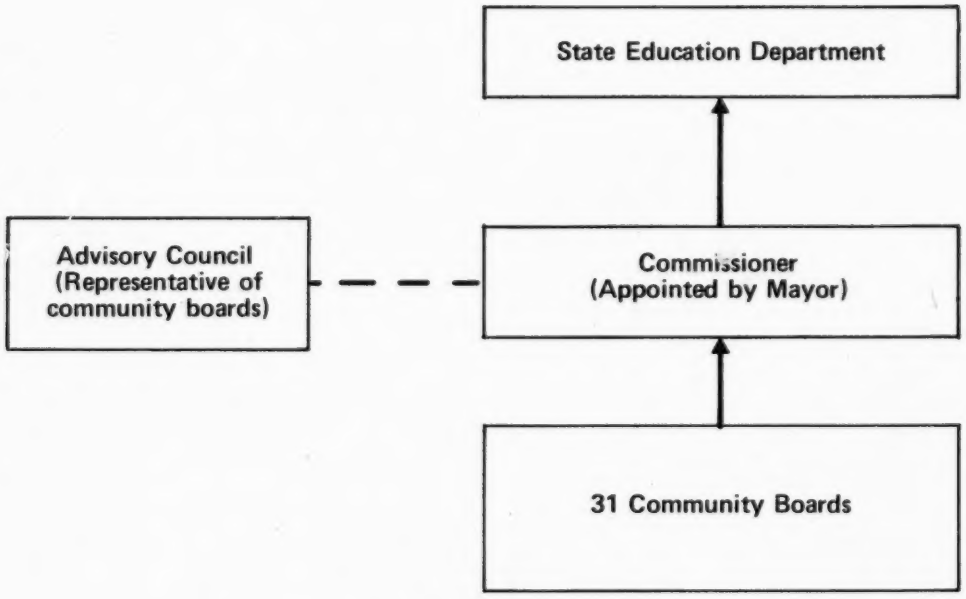

Figure 8. System Proposed by State Board of Regents for New York City

1. Central Board of Education and Chancellor to be replaced by Mayor-appointed Commissioner.
2. Would strengthen chief administrator's authority by relating to Office of Mayor.
3. Would make accountability, now diffuse, more direct.
4. No change in relationship of new central authority with community boards and State Education Department.

Fleischmann Commission Proposal: Governance

The New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost, and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Fleischmann Commission), of which Senator Laverne is a member, recommends a regional approach similar to that described in the Laverne Proposal. The Commission identified a need for an "intermediate school governance level" in the State's educational system. The BOCES provides the framework for this level, the Commission said, but, under the existing structure, BOCES "have not succeeded uniformly across the state in providing effective and economical services." [13] In some areas BOCES provide extensive programs; in others, they do not. The Commission urged that the BOCES system be strengthened, but not to the extent recommended by the Laverne Proposal.

The Fleischmann regionalism proposals assume full state financing of the public schools and the institution of a single uniform type of school district. In its chapter on Governance, the Commission makes four basic recommendations:

1. that individual schools be made responsible for many decisions on curriculum, personnel and budget which are now the responsibilities of school districts;

2. that small school districts be consolidated and that the "supervisory districts" set up to administer these small districts be eliminated;

3. that intermediate (regional) school systems provide special educational programs for handicapped students, vocational education and highly specialized courses as well as administrative services for school districts;

4. that multidisciplinary diagnostic teams be formed, through SED financing and BOCES administration, to identify learning problems and to monitor recommended remedies.

District Superintendent

The role conflict of the District Superintendent, described earlier in this paper, was recognized by the Commission as an obstacle to further development of BOCES functions and to the regionalization of the State Education Department. The Commission proposed the consolidation of smaller school districts, which would eliminate the need for supervisory districts. It also proposed creating a single uniform type of school district to replace the present confusing variety of school districts. It was proposed that each district have its own superintendent.

This superintendent would have management responsibility and greater public reporting responsibilities for the school district. The school principal within each school district would assume greater operational responsibility, with the support of increased citizen participation.

The District Superintendent would no longer be involved in the internal operations of school districts. The only function specifically proposed to be removed, however, is the supervision of the supervisory district. Actually, the Fleischmann proposal would create a new conflicting role by making a BOCES Executive the SED representative for a multi-BOCES region, responsible for administering certain State-funded programs (see Figure 9).

BOCES

The Commission found that the incentives for school districts to join multi-district or area-wide systems of educational services were insufficient. It proposed that BOCES provide with direct State funding all high-cost instructional services, -- such as special classes for children who are handicapped, vocational programs and programs for students with special aptitudes -- as well as technical administrative services. All administrative and high-cost instructional expenses of the BOCES, now shared by component districts and the State, would be funded directly by the State. The Commission suggested that many BOCES activities could take place in local schools rather than in separate or special BOCES buildings.

Less essential specialized courses, which appeal to so few students that they could not be offered by an individual school district, could be provided by BOCES. These services would continue to be purchased from BOCES by individual school districts out of their per pupil allocation from the State.

Additional operational responsibilities and supplementary administrative services (audio-visual aid services, library services, procurement and computer services) could be coordinated and centralized in BOCES. The Commission notes that these services, now offered by a few BOCES, should be offered throughout the State. Supplemental and innovative educational programs (adult and migrant education, coordination with correctional institutions, museums and cultural centers, conference and workshop sponsorship) could be coordinated by BOCES.

BOCES and Large Cities

To bring the benefits of BOCES tc the State's large cities, the Commission recommends that these cities be included in the BOCES system, not simply to achieve economies of scaled but, more importantly, to permit joint action by cities and suburbs on area-wide problems. The report is not explicit about how the large

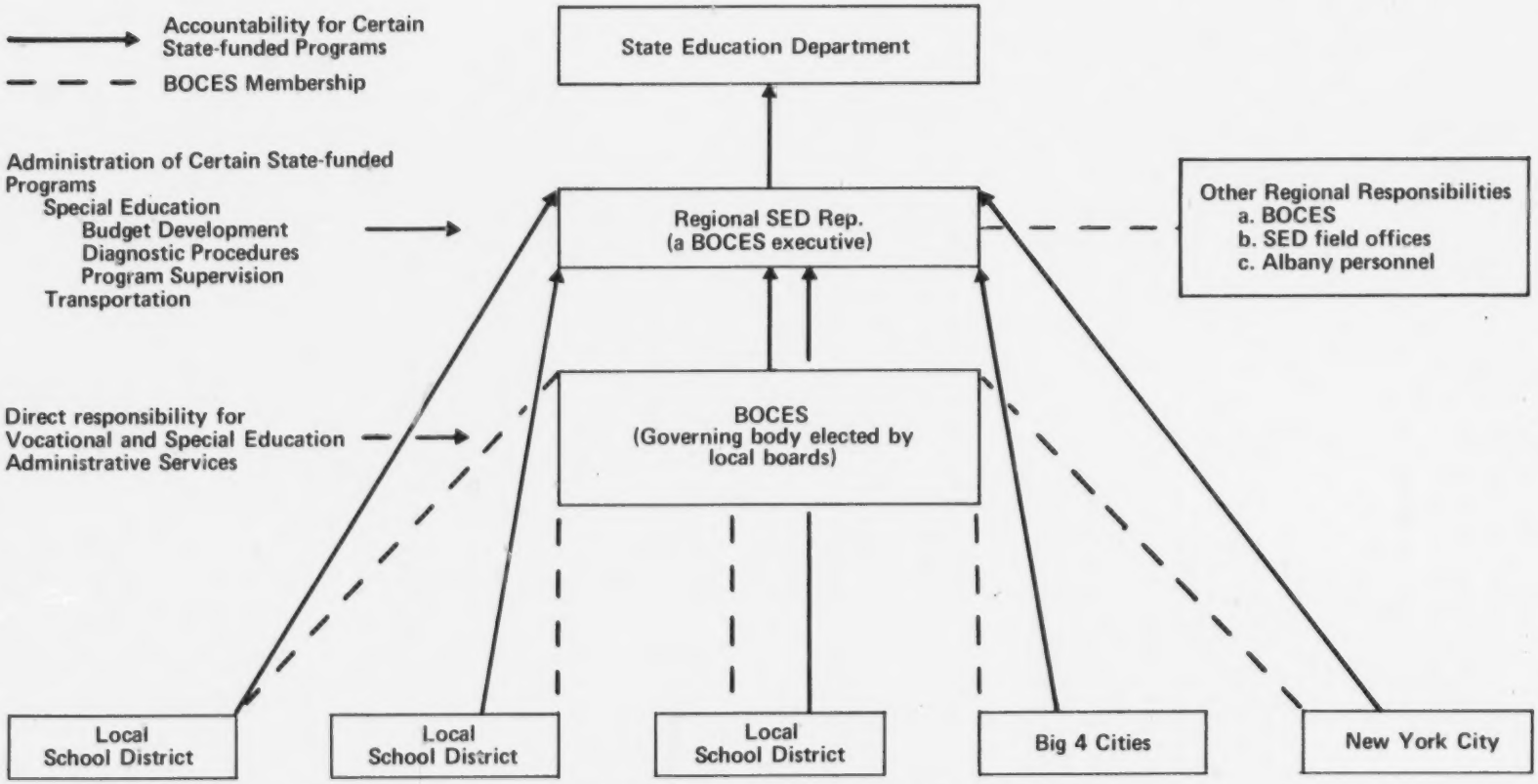

Figure 9. Fleischmann Commission Proposal: Evolutionary, not Planned Regionalism.

1. Dual role of District Superintendant would be resolved by consolidation of small districts and elimination of supervisory district.
2. BOCES directly responsible for high-cost educational programs.
3. A BOCES executive would be chosen to act as SED representative for each region to administer certain State-funded programs.
4. Other regional responsibilities would be managed by:
   a. BOCES
   b. Regional SED field officer, or
   c. Albany personnel responsible for a particular region.

cities should move into the BOCES system. It mentions as a possibility the merger of city BOCES programs with neighboring BOCES. In Erie and Monroe Counties, which each have two BOCES, mergers of the existing BOCES units with BOCES-type programs in Buffalo and Rochester respectively are suggested.

Representation

The existing procedure for electing the governing body of BOCES does not guarantee that BOCES board members will be responsive to the needs of local school districts. The Commission favored the representation proposal developed by the Monroe County Educational Planning Committee, a system in which BOCES board membership would be shared roughly in proportion to the number of students in component districts. To keep the BOCES board to a manageable size, some smaller school districts would share a representative. (The Commission did not accept, however, the Monroe County proposal for a federation of school districts.)

Under the Monroe County proposal, the governing body would continue to be elected, as it is now, by members of component school boards. But BOCES board members would be required to be members of local school boards, a new requirement. An exception to this requirement was proposed for large cities, where BOCES board membership might be as large as its representation on the BOCES board. The Commission proposed that only a majority of a large city school district's membership on a BOCES board be required to be school board members; the others would be elected by the city board as a whole. Staggered two or three-year terms of office, rather than the current five-year term, for Board members is recommended.

Mergers

The Commission urged that smaller BOCES be merged so that each BOCES would be large enough to perform the proposed mandated services. Also favored, in large BOCES areas, was the geographic scattering of BOCES programs to make these programs accessible.

Regionalism in the State Education Department

The Fleischmann Commission proposed that the State Education Department be decentralized by gradually devolving the supervisory and supportive responsibilities of the State Education Department to BOCES, to a regional SED representative or to Albany personnel responsible for a particular region. This delegation of responsibility would be done by the Commissioner in a pragmatic, function-by-function manner, on the basis of where in the educational hierarchy a function might best be performed. As BOCES executives are freed of responsibility for the internal operations of small school districts, the Fleischmann Commission says, they will become

more capable of taking on added regional responsibilities. The Commission notes that

> In each instance [of decentralizing a function] the alternatives are several: delegation might be to one BOCES operating on behalf of other BOCES in its region; to a regional officer or representative working in the field; or to central Albany office personnel responsible for matters concerning a particular region. [14]

In certain fields, such as programs for children with special needs (budget development, diagnostic procedures and program supervision) and pupil transportation, the Commission recommends regional administration. A BOCES executive would be chosen as a representative of the State Education Department to administer these programs. Coordination of education planning with comprehensive county and municipal planning, as well as coordination with higher education programs, is another major function which could be given to regional offices. The Commission also noted that educational planning is not now coordinated with the State's comprehensive regional planning agencies. This could be accomplished through the regional SED representative.

Delegation of responsibility should not mean extensive hiring of new employees for a new non-teaching level in the educational hierarchy, the Commission said. Decentralization should be accomplished, to the greatest extent possible, by deploying current employees of local districts, BOCES, and the department.

The regions which the Commission recommends for the educational system are, with minor variations and one major exception, the official State planning and development regions designated by the Governor (see Figure 3). The minor variations would come where school district lines or BOCES lines do not coincide with the boundaries of the official regions. The major exception would be in the Tri-State Region covering the New York urban area -- New York City, Long Island and the counties north of New York City. A regional office is proposed for each of the three subsections of the Tri-State Region.

New York City

In New York City, the Fleischmann Commission recommended that a nine-member Central Board of Education be appointed by the Mayor: six members from a list of ten submitted by community school boards, and three members "at his total discretion." [15] The Central School Board would serve as a citywode BOCES. Its chief executive, the Chancellor, would be the BOCES executive (see figure 10).

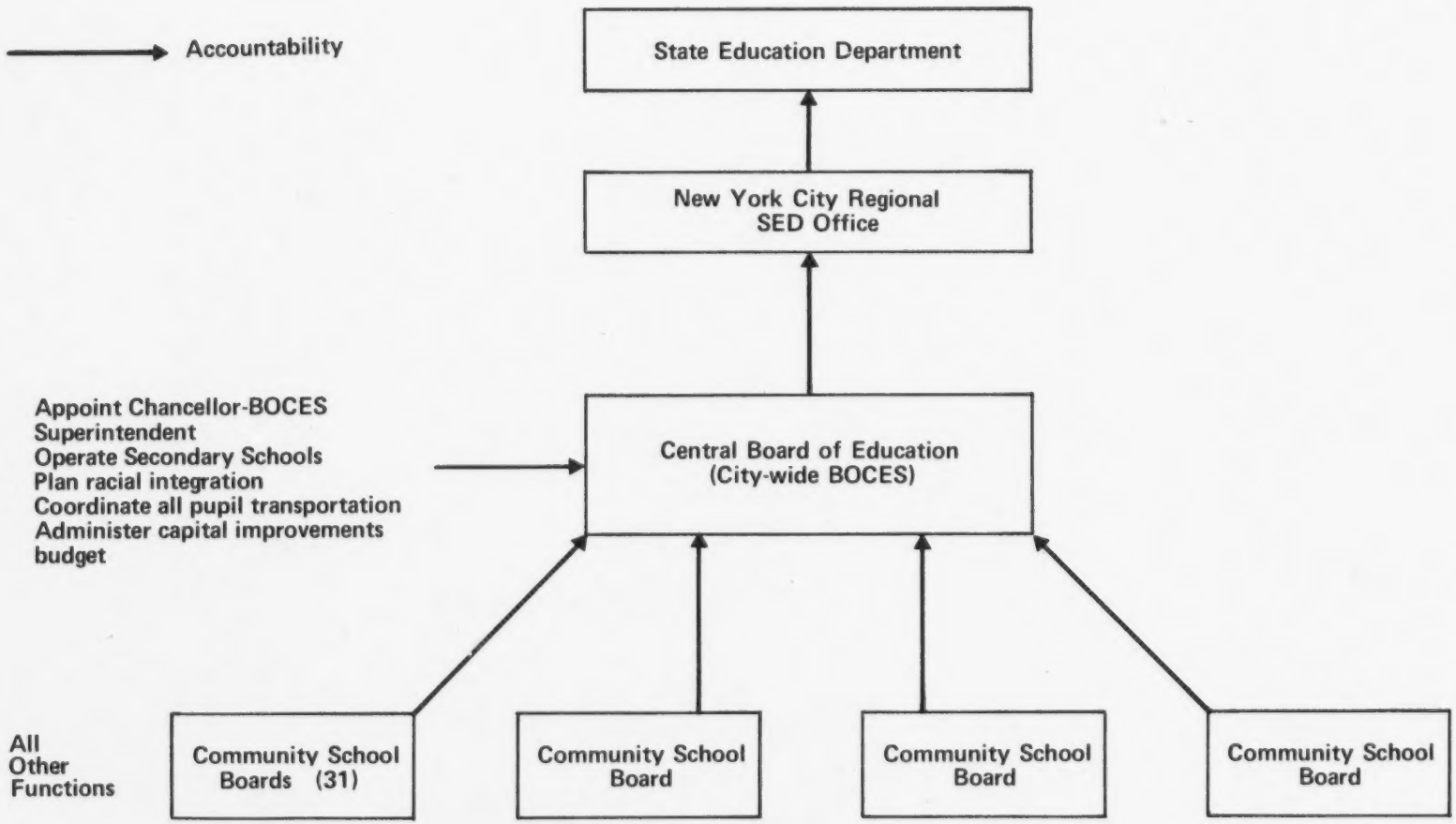

Figure 10. Fleischmann Commission Proposal on New York City

1. New York City would have its own regional SED office.
2. Central Board of Education would serve as city-wide BOCES.
3. With full State funding, community district budgets would no longer be controlled by Central Board.
4. Community Boards would have powers similar to other local districts, except for powers assigned to Central Board.

The Chancellor would be elected by the Central Board, subject to the approval of the State Commissioner of Education. The Central Board would operate the City's high schools, plan racial integration, define community school district boundaries, operate all pupil transportation and administer the school system's capital expenditure program. All those functions not specifically assigned to the Central Board would be performed by the Community School Districts. The operation of these districts would become comparable to that of the rest of the State's school districts.

Conclusion: Criticism of the Fleischmann Recommendations

Because the Fleischmann recommendations on governance assume full State funding, the Commission's report does not include a plan for phasing State funding gradually into sectors of the school system. Its phase-in plans are limited to moving per-pupil expenditures (for children with no unusual learning problems) in school districts gradually to a single statewide level. The change to full State funding might be a more manageable task if it were to start with the BOCES system.

The Fleischmann recommendation on the BOCES governing body, which would link BOCES more closely to local districts, leaves the development of the intermediate level of the educational system still dependent on the inclination of local school districts. The Commission apparently recognized this problem in the Monroe County recommendation. The problem was identified in an earlier draft of this paper which appeared as Appendix 11A of the Fleischmann Commission's final report. [16] In its criticism of the present method of selecting the BOCES board, the Commission implied that its proposed alternative would "assure that BOCES board members are responsive to the citizens, administrators or school boards of local districts." [17] It is primarily the technique rather than the intent, of the representation proposal which this Committee criticized. It is the technique rather than the statement of intent, which should be modified.

In the Commission's recommendation on including the State's large cities in the BOCES system, no specific plans are recommended for integrating large cities into the existing BOCES system in a way which would promote, as effectively as possible, area-wide planning for the major metropolitan areas. The development of metropolis-wide BOCES is necessary for coordinating metropolis-wide educational planning. This Committee considers the issue of area-wide BOCES for metropolitan areas too important to be left to chance. Legislation admitting the large cities into the BOCES system should either require the formation of metropolis-wide BOCES or contain strong incentives for their formation.

The responsibility for coordinating the educational programs of public and private agencies or departments (for example, mental health, health, social services and labor) is not assigned by the Commission in its recommendations on governance. The Commission's proposal for coordination of education planning with county and municipal comprehensive planning is ambiguous. The responsibility would be given to BOCES executives in a manner which is not clearly defined. While the Commission would remove the District Superintendents' responsibility for supervising smaller districts because of the conflict it presents with the operation of a BOCES, it adds a new conflicting responsibility. The administration of the New York State educational system under the Commission's recommendations would suffer from the ambiguity of the proposed division of responsibilities between BOCES and the regional offices of the State Education Department.

In its definition of regions, on the other hand, the Fleischmann Commission is specific. This Committee finds that there is now no clear justification for choosing one particular regional configuration over another. It may be that the official state planning and development regions are the best choice for regions in the educational system. The Commission's report does not however, supply a strong justification for that choice. This Committee suggests that the definition of regions should be evolutionary, while the regionalizing process itself should be more clearly defined.

Monroe County Proposal: Federated Intermediate School District

The Monroe County Educational Planning Committee, consisting of public and private school administrators in the county, has

proposed a "Federated Intermediate Educational District" (FIED) to replace the BOCES. [13] In Monroe County, to which the Educational Planning Committee devoted its study, the FIED would be similar to a countywide BOCES, including the City of Rochester. There are now two BOCES in the county, from which the City of Rochester is excluded by statute.

The planning committee's proposal outlines an organizational framework for the intermediate district. The specific functions of the FIED would be left to the discretion of the district's governing body, but the committee's report includes recommendations on the functions which could be assigned to the district. The FIED would not therefore be given a clearly-defined mission of its own. It would continue to respond to needs as they are perceived by local school districts. See Figure 11.

Local Control

The major concern of the planning committee in drawing up its proposal for the intermediate level was the retention of local control. The meaning of "local control" in the FIED proposal, however, appears to mean control by local school boards rather than control directly by the public.

In the existing BOCES, one of the major impediments to popular local control is the BOCES' lack of visibility. The lack of public notice is due in part to the fact that the public does not participate in the selection of the BOCES board. The indirect election of the board would be continued in the FIED plan. The plan does include useful elements, however, particularly its approach to representation.

Other major concerns of the planning committee were: that countywide financing be provided for the activities of the FIED; that the planning process be linked with decision-making to assure implementation of plans; and that comprehensive educational planning include--besides public elementary and secondary education--higher education, private education, adult education, and educationally- related activities such as museums, art galleries and educational television.

Major Elements of the Proposed FIED

The planning committee's model is based on a federation of the 18 local school districts within Monroe County. It would be built on the legal base of Article 40 of the State Education Law--the Intermediate School District Law--with some modifications. (The sections of Article 40 which deal with Intermediate School Districts were repealed by Chapter 378 of the Laws of 1972). Figure 12 shows the structure proposed for the district, as well as the functions recommended by the planning committee.

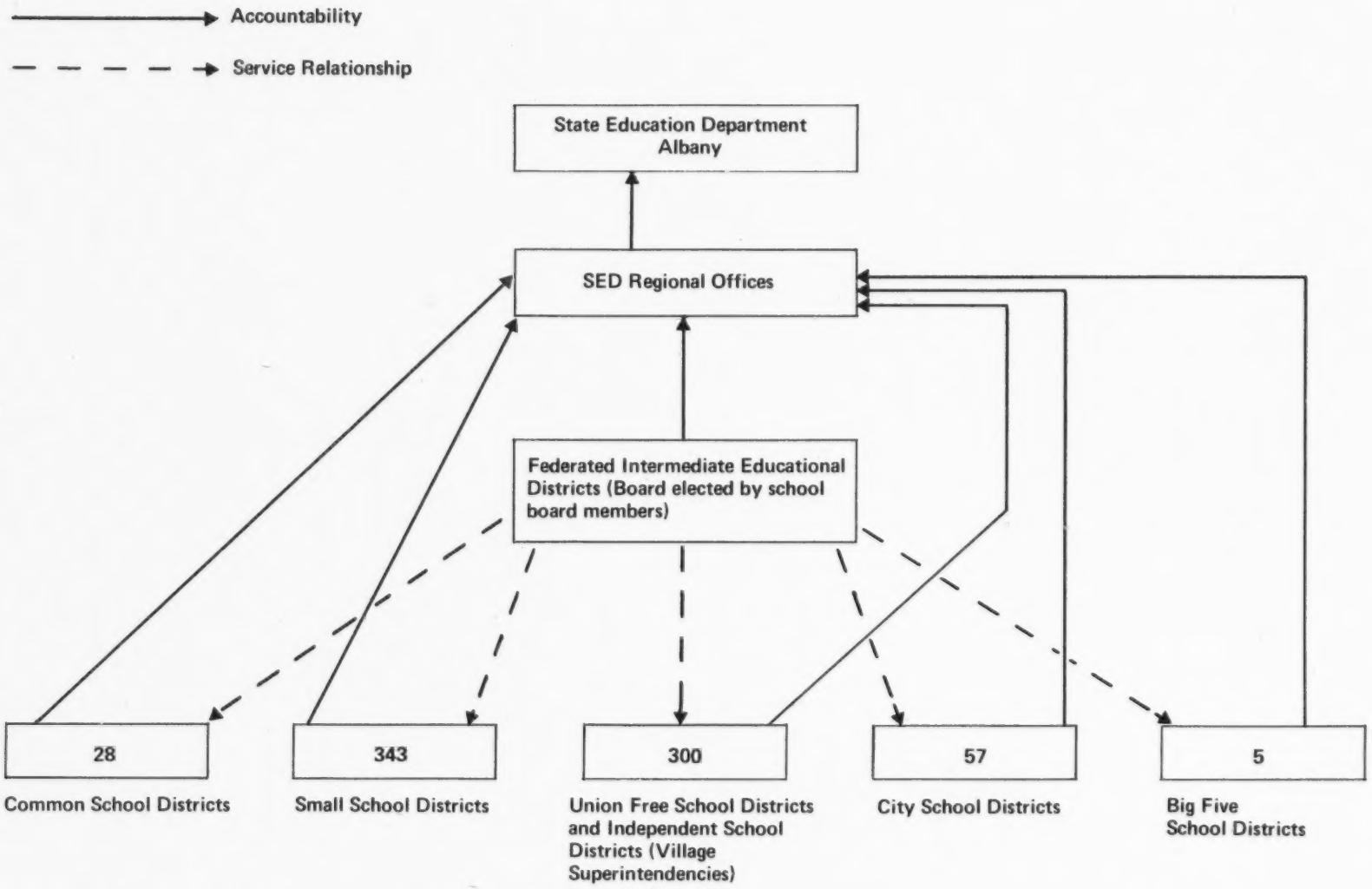

Figure 11. Monroe County Proposal 1. Federated Intermediate Educational District.
2. Regional School System would still be dependent on Local Districts.
3. SED would be decentralized.

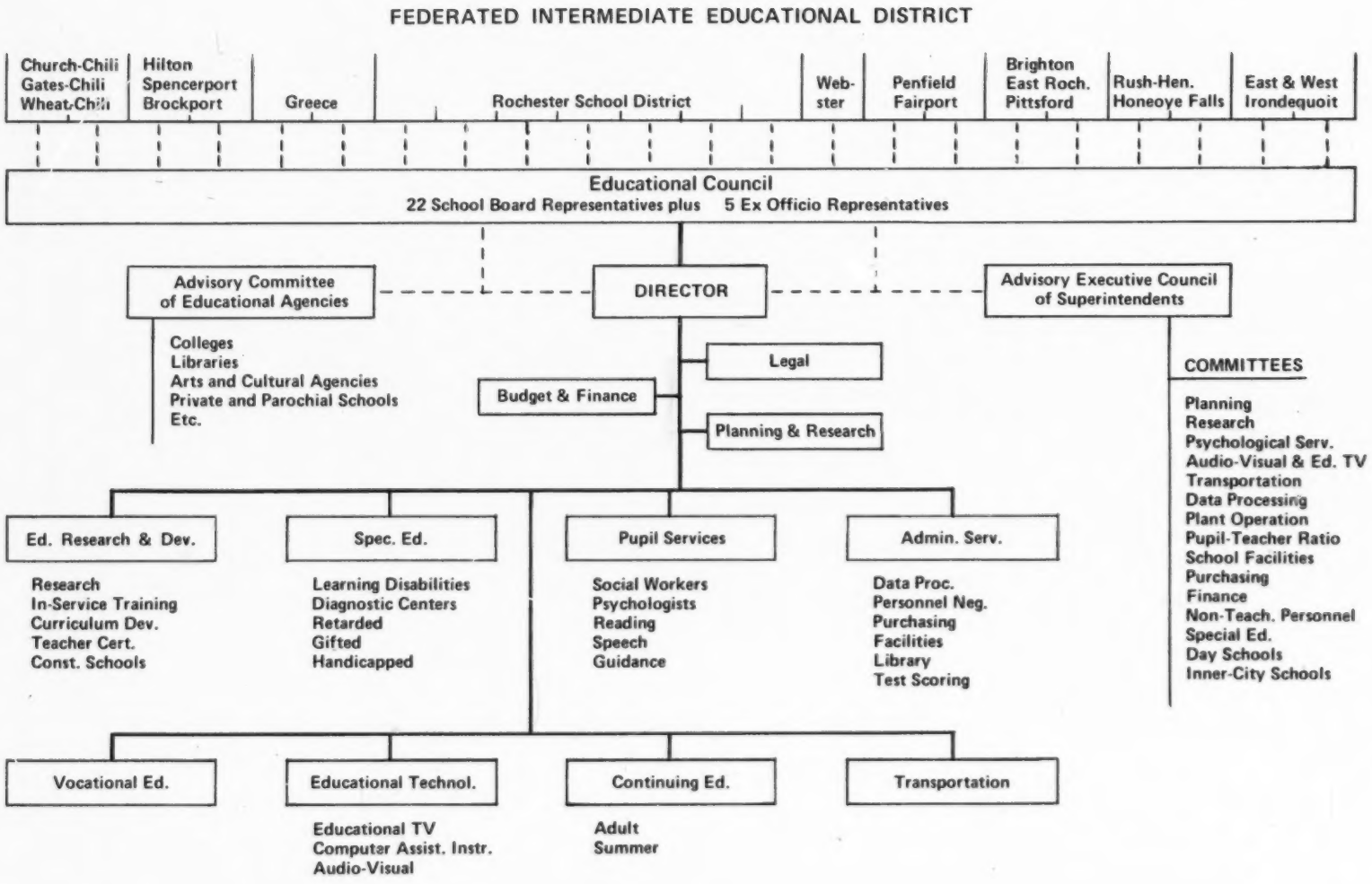

Figure 12. Structure and recommended functions of the proposed "Federated Intermediate Educational District" (FIED). The actual functions would be at the discretion of the district's governing body. Report of the Monroe County Educational Planning Committee, A Proposed Model for a County Federation of School Districts, August 1971, p. 29.

Representation. A 27-member Educational Council would be created. Twenty two of the members would be directly responsible to, and selected from the membership of, the 18 local school boards. School districts would have either individual or shared elective representation on the Intermediate District Educational Council, depending on the size of their respective public school enrollments. The Council would also include five ex-officio members with voting power, representing such interests as the Catholic Diocese, area colleges and universities and arts and cultural organizations.

Control of FIED. Control of countywide educational activities would reside with the Educational Council, which would hire a county director as the district's chief administrator. The director would head an Advisory Executive Council of school district superintendents. This council would have professional standing committees covering such areas as transportation, research, planning, finance, facilities and special education. An Advisory Committee of Educational Agencies, represent non-public education concerns, would have voting power in the Educational Council through ex-officio council seats.

Countywide Tax. The proposed district could, with the approval of the county legislature, levy a countywide educational tax. It could also get State aid, similar to the present BOCES aid, for countywide educational services and facilities.

Although local school boards would continue to control basic education, the Educational Council would have significant countywide planning, operational and fiscal powers. The Council, the planning committee says, should be able to determine educational priorities of a countywide nature and to establish the programs to deal with those priorities.

Future Role of BOCES

One of the first questions for the Council, the planning committee says, would be the future role of the present BOCES operations in the county. With the formation of a Federated Intermediate Educational District (FIED), the vacuum which the BOCES were created to fill would no longer exist.

The planning committee says that the existing BOCES operations could play an important role in establishing countywide educational services and administration. Many of the present BOCES staff members would provide a solid nucleus of experience and leadership for the FIED's development and evolution. Many administrative and educational services now being provided by one or both of the BOCES operations could be the core of an expanded base of services and functions. BOCES facilities and equipment would presumably be available for the proposed district.

Statewide Application of the FIED Model

The concept of the metropolitan federation of school districts developed by the Monroe County committee was extended to other metropolitan areas in the state by Jerome Zukosky, former staff director of the Joint Legislative Committee on Metropolitan and Regional Areas Study. In a paper prepared as a consultant to the New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Fleischmann Commission), Zukosky proposes Metropolitan School Board Federations which would take over the present functions of BOCES in urban areas. Each federation would appoint a superintendent; he would not be a State officer as the District Superintendent is now. In the New York City area, he proposed federations of districts in the suburban counties and a New York City Affairs Office for the City.

His proposal includes a plan for decentralization of the State Education Department. Policy-making would stay in Albany; regulatory supervision would be the responsibility of the intermediate districts.

State-funded regional planning and coordination offices would be set up in each official state planning and development region (see Figure 3 above). In the Tri-State Region which includes New York City however, two regional offices are proposed. One would cover the City and the suburban counties close to the City: Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Rockland and Putnam. The regional planning board for this region would be made up of the director of the proposed State office for New York City Affairs, the presidents of the suburban federations and members of the City board. The other regional office would cover the Mid-Hudson sector, including Dutchess, Ulster, Orange and Sullivan counties.

Organizing for Innovation: A Proposed "Education Research Agency"

A 1961 study which focused on the problem of developing and introducing new educational techniques into the public school system recommended the creation of a semi-autonomous "Education Research Agency." [14] This study, by Henry M. Brickell, found that innovations are introduced into the public schools in a haphazard manner with no rigorous evaluation. Changes are usually evaluated, he said, "by observing the reactions of the students while they are receiving the new instruction." [15] This study did not go into the general question of the structure of the school system.

The system he proposed to improve the prospects for worthwhile innovation was derived from the successful national experience with the Agricultural Extension Service. His proposal distinguishes three necessary elements in innovation: design, evaluation and dissemination. He recommended a "semi-autonomous

Education Research Agency" (see Figure 13):

> The Agency should use State funds to create deliberately in field locations all across the State the enriched settings needed for the design of new instructional programs. The inventors should not be Agency staff members but rather school and college people hired temporarily, brought together and freed to design a program.
>
> After a program has been designed, the Agency should put it through an elaborate statewide field test to find what it will accomplish. Here again the evaluators should not be Agency staff members but school and college people hired temporarily to do the job.
>
> When the field test has been completed, the Agency should urge the dissemination of the program through regional School Development Units which should be created for that purpose. [16]

Brickell proposed that the regional School Development Units would demonstrate programs tested and endorsed by the Education Research Agency, teach the new programs to teachers and get them into the curricula of colleges and universities. Actual demonstrations would be by public school teachers. The teaching of new techniques would be done by teachers from the colleges and from the public schools hired temporarily by a regional School Development Unit. The permanent staff of the unit would have only administrative functions.

Brickell's identification of design, evaluation and dissemination as key elements in innovation provides helpful guidance for the design of a regionalized education system which is flexible enough to encourage careful innovation. The State Education Department, for whom Brickell did his study, has taken steps to adapt the existing educational system for acceptance of innovation. This effort is the department's program for "Redesign."

Project Redesign: Self-Renewal for Education

Project Redesign is a long-range planning effort aimed at continuing self-renewal for the State's educational system. [17] It grew out of a comprehensive review of the system undertaken when Commissioner Nyquist entered the Department. The study suggested that the existing approach to solving long-recognized problems in the educational system was inadequate. The needs of each district could not be assessed from the top. Innovation from the top did not generally take root. When it did, it was scattered piecemeal through the system, with no real effect on the system as a whole. Change was reacted to instead of planned.

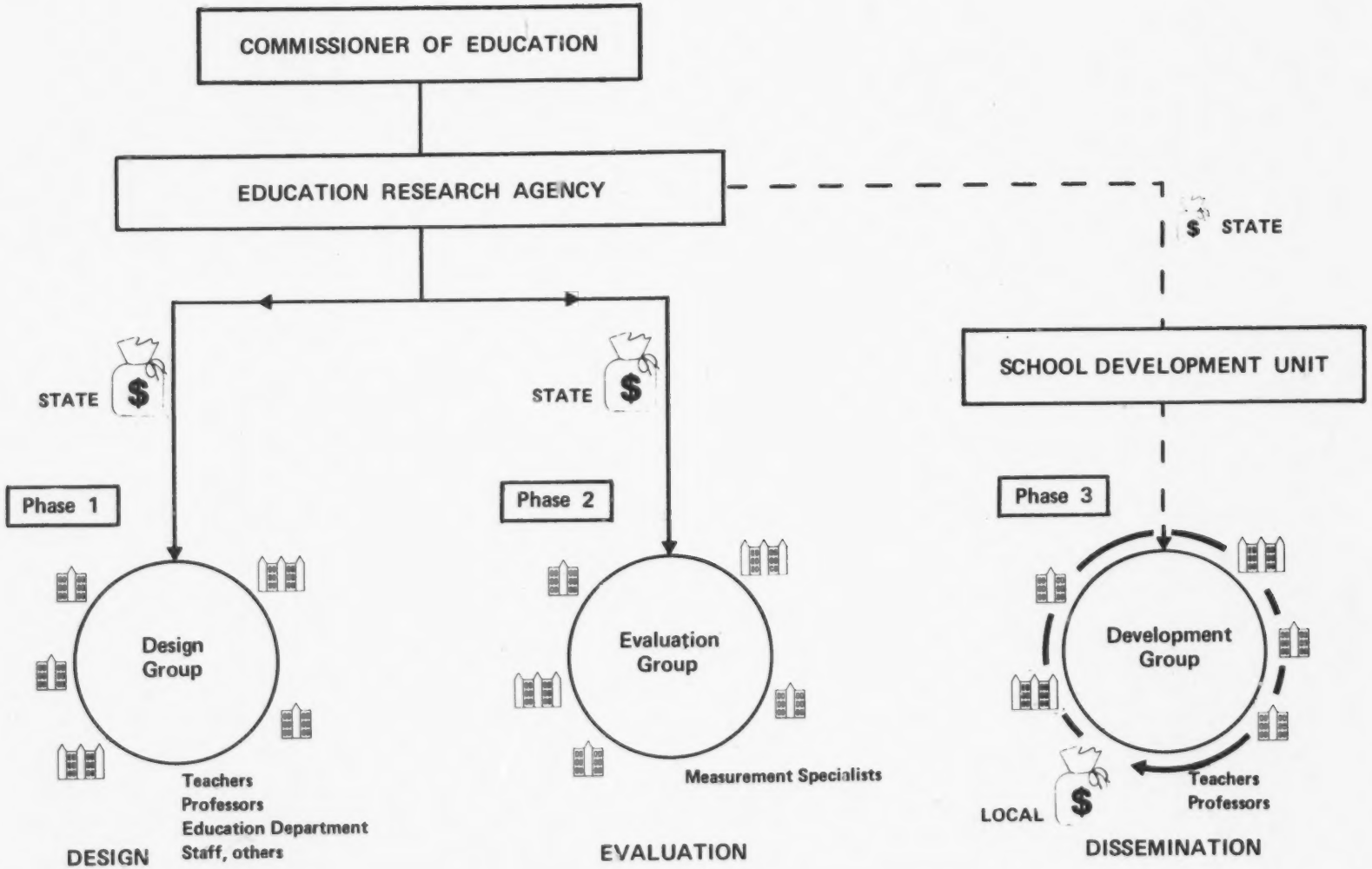

Figure 13. A 1961 recommendation proposed a semi-autonomous Education Research Agency which would create centers for Design Groups, set up an Evaluation Group to test innovations and disseminate proven innovations through regional School Development Groups. Henry M. Brickell, Organizing New York State for Educational Change (Albany, N.Y.: New York State Education Department, 1961) pp. 54-55.

The Redesign Process

The aim of Redesign is to create a system which is responsive to local community needs. The Redesign process has four key elements:

1. Planning: to teach and require local districts to do long range planning, acquainting them with good management practices so that school programs will be responsive to the community's projected future. Students coming out of schools should have skills which allow them to find jobs in their own community.

2. Community Involvement: regular involvement of the local community. The goal is to establish a mechanism for on-going participation of the community in planning.

3. Local Initiative: each district should decide, on the basis of its own planning, what programs it needs. The Department intends to change its own rules to allow districts the freedom to implement program changes.

4. Reallocation of Resources: every level of the education system involved in Redesign is encouraged to reshape and redistribute its present resources, rather than look for new ones.

Progress of Redesign

Redesign has been started in four experimental districts in the State: rural, suburban, small city and inner city (Cassadaga Valley, Greece, Watertown and District #7, Bronx). Each district is getting about $90,000 in Federal funds.

The districts chosen were, of course, those "most likely to succeed." An important element in the choice of districts was a combination of enthusiasm and commitment on the part of the district superintendent and board members. With their support, the department has tried to accomplish four things in these districts:

1. The creation of a representative planning committee to begin a thorough review of the local school system. The committee's work involves identification and analysis of the future of the community, and a definition of the desired goals of the local school system. A management consulting firm was available to help the district redesign administrative structures.

2. The education of non-professional people on planning committees in areas of educational planning and management.

3. The adoption of small change projects, undertaken with the department's help. These projects were adopted as a way of building skills so that districts could make major changes on their own.

4. The identification of needed resources: in the Department of Education, in regional centers or in outside consultants.

Cassadaga Valley has advanced the furthest in Redesign. Plans for the 1971-72 school year call for a new approach to physical education, an "open cafeteria," a course in local history taught by people from the community, a new approach to guidance involving many people with whom students are in contact every day, extensive plans for new approaches to reading, and an "alternative school" for seniors. All prototype districts will begin major changes based on Redesign planning by 1973. Forty-nine other districts have begun redesign with no financial help from the State; 55 have expressed active interest.

The Department's role will change as Redesign proceeds. Its task will be to make sure that good planning and management are taking place on the local level rather than to supervise in the traditional sense of making sure that requirements are met. One area of the State's responsibility which the Redesign program has not adequately dealt with is evaluation. If local districts are to be given greater freedom to evolve their own programs, the State must develop criteria to evaluate these changes.

Expansion Through Regional Centers

One of the most important questions for Redesign is how its program is to be expanded throughout the State. The Department proposes to use the Title III Regional Centers. There are sixteen of these centers in the state, with staffs ranging from four to ten professions. Funded under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 until June 1972, they are now being incorporated into BOCES, with their services available on the same basis as other BOCES services. These formerly independent centers are becoming "planning offices" attached to one of the BOCES in each of the 13 "emerging regions".

A State Regional Redesign Coordinator supervises this regional effort. Each of the Regional Centers has a Regional Redesigner. This Regional Network is responsible for starting Redesign efforts in districts throughout the state.

The weakness of this proposed regional coordination is that it is questionable whether the Regional Centers are equipped, in terms of personnel and resources, even after their incorporation into BOCES, to carry out the task of aiding over 700 school districts with the process of Redesign. The total staff of these centers was cut from 117 in 1971 down to 70 in 1972. With no further resources, these centers could only serve as communication links, with most department activity still centered in Albany. What is needed is a network of regional departmental

offices with the extensive resources envisioned in the Laverne Proposal.

Conclusion

In developing the Laverne Proposal on Regionalism in Education, this Committee will incorporate those elements of other proposals which will improve the preliminary proposal. The Committee intends to take full advantage of the thought and experience behind these other proposals.

The Laverne Proposal has assumed that there will be basic changes in the system for financing the schools and that these changes will make it possible to accomplish reforms which are more far-reaching than those which would be possible under the existing system. Other proposals assume that the present method of finance will continue. The difference in assumptions explains many of the differences in the proposals themselves.

The Committee will be seeking other insights into problems of implementation in the development of its final proposal. The Committee is aiming at a final product which will be more than a paper proposal. The final product should be one which will improve what happens in the classroom, which will improve the quality of the education we offer our young people.

The Committee is also interested in exploring the possibility of taking advantage of impending reforms in school finance and governance to inject other reforms into the public school system. While school finance and governance reforms will not be enough by themselves to make the schools more effective, they do make the ground fertile for other changes which would directly effect what happens between teacher and child. The Committee has identified six such areas (see Figure 14):

1. Decentralization of the State Education Department through regionalism,

2. Rotation of professional personnel,

3. New techniques for supervision,

4. Replacement of teacher tenure with peer review,

5. Regional child development centers, and

6. Feeding programs at schools for the elderly and others.

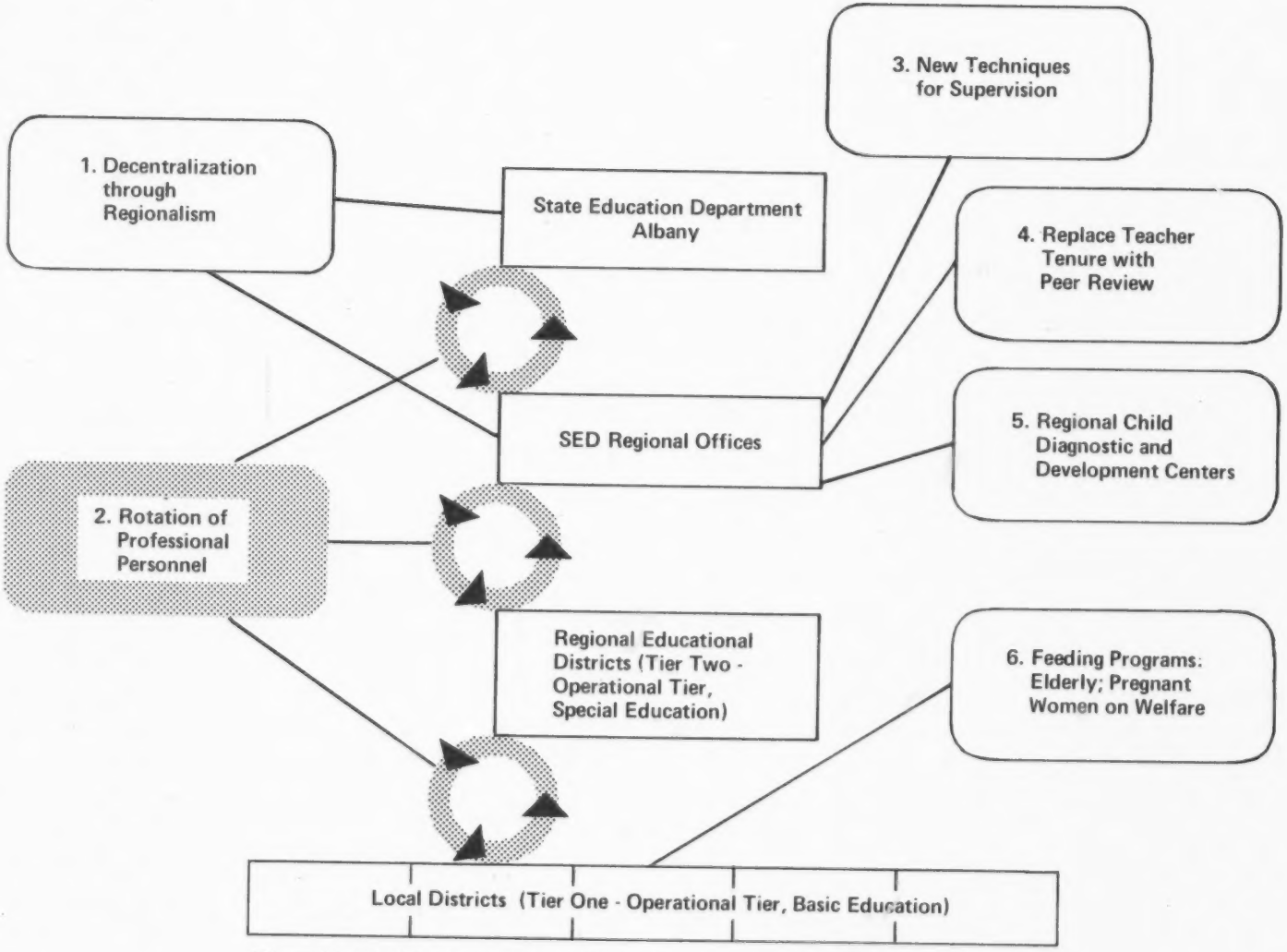
1. Decentralization through Regionalism
State Education Department Albany
3. New Techniques for Supervision
4. Replace Teacher Tenure with Peer Review
SED Regional Offices
5. Regional Child Diagnostic and Development Centers
2. Rotation of Professional Personnel
Regional Educational Districts (Tier Two - Operational Tier, Special Education)
6. Feeding Programs: Elderly; Pregnant Women on Welfare
Local Districts (Tier One - Operational Tier, Basic Education)

Figure 14. The New York State Legislative Committee on Metropolitan and Regional Areas Study, which is considering proposals for restructuring the State's elementary and secondary education system, seeks to use the opportunity presented by reorganization to incorporate beneficial innovations into the school system.

Decentralization Through Regionalism

Public school administrators and teachers in New York State are almost universally critical of the State Education Department. The department is described as "remote," "ineffectual," "unresponsive," "uncoordinated," "absurdly sanguine." In short, public school professionals manifest a clear dissatisfaction with "Albany." These complaints are common in the age of massive, centralized administrative structures.

The State Education Department has grown dramatically in authority, size and function in the past decade. Despite its size and highly professionalized staff, it has failed in its present form to make the impact it could make upon the public school system of the state. It has, however, spawned an unfortunate and counterproductive resentment.

This Committee, after extensive interviewing of public school professionals, has concluded that much of this resentment is directly attributable to the department's extreme centralization. One solution to the problem presented by this monolithic and inaccessible administrative structure is decentralization.

Under the decentralization plan being considered by the Committee, the State Education Department's supportive, advisory and coordinating functions would be transferred to approximately 12 regional offices. This decentralization would be accompanied by the adoption of a two-tiered operational system for public elementary and secondary schools.

Tier One, made up of local school districts, would be responsible for the basic educational program. Tier Two, would be made up of regional school districts built upon the existing Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES); this tier would be responsible for all special educational programs, those for the gifted as well as those for the handicapped.

The performance of the two independent operating systems would be monitored by Child Diagnostic and Development Centers operating under the regional SED offices. These centers would be responsible for monitoring both pupil progress and school performance; they would also act as referees in the placement of children in the programs of the two operational tiers.

Regional decentralization of the State Education Department appears desirable for a number of reasons. As presently constituted, the department excludes virtually all client participation. Neither suggestions nor complaints flow up the hierarchy from the public school systems. The principals, the school districts, do not participate in decision-making.

The present structure has proved incapable of meeting the challenge of diversity. Plans and policies emanating from "Albany" are too often tailored to meet the needs of some abstract "average" school district; they seldom meet the needs of real school districts. Communication between "Albany" and the school systems varies from sporadic to non-existent. What communication there is often proves to be dysfunctional. Furthermore, institutional prerogatives are beginning to usurp policy objectives. Loyalty in the State Education Department is primarily to the department rather than to the public school system.

Decentralization, on the other hand, would bring a number of benefits. It would increase administrative responsibility and accountability, and would increase participation in decision-making by public school personnel. It would improve communication between administrative and public school personnel. It would offset many of the disadvantages of the "large unit" trend in New York State administration.

One of the chief benefits would be a greater understanding of local problems on the part of those in the administrative structure. The loyalties of administrative professionals would reach a better balance. An increase in initiative on the part of public school professionals could be expected as well as an increase in cooperation between the public school system and the state administrative system.

Rotation of Professional Personnel

The quality of the men who occupy positions in the professional echelons of the State Education Department has been improved through stricter entrance requirements, generous salaries, and meaningful career opportunities. But this change has not been translated into operational results in the public school system.

One of the chief criticisms of administrative structures in recent years has been their insular nature. It often appears more and more difficult to get these structures to serve agreed-upon state or national goals. Several causative factors are considered responsible for this condition.

Professionalism

The first of these factors is professionalism. With growing functional specialization, the civil servant has come to think of himself as a professional in education or economics first and as a government official only second. This kind of professionalism is not always desirable, as it can shift concern away from furthering State policy to raising the prestige of educators, from improving the quality of State programs to refining particular kinds of educational knowledge.

Careerism

A second factor, comprised of several elements, might be called "careerism." Careerism denotes a situation in which personal status maintenance and enhancement is accorded greater importance than the policy requirements of the state. Experts in public administration indicate that careerism manifests itself most distinctly in a failure to accept responsibility, which in turn promotes insularity and lack of accountability.

In the State Education Department, middle and upper management personnel are heavily recruited from within the public school system. These men and women move into the department with the highest of public service ideals, but they quickly assume "professional" and "career" roles. Interviews indicate that their idealism and enthusiasm often yield to institutional rather than substantive demands.

This Committee is considering a system of personnel rotation by which undue "professional" and "career" influences on administrators in the department could be significantly reduced. Personnel recruited from the public school systems, including teachers, would be required to return to these systems after having served a specified period in the State Education Department. The rotation system could be designed to include the department's Albany headquarters, its regional officials and the two operational tiers of the school system. All administrators would be given periodic teaching assignments.

A well-designed system of rotation could provide a constant source of fresh, idealistic, energetic personnel for the State Education Department. By the time the "professional" and "career" affectations of the bureaucracy begin to develop in staff members, it will be time for them to return to the public school system. These affectations will be less likely to manifest themselves as administrative traits when tenure is circumscribed in advance by law.

The public school systems, on the other hand, should be greatly invigorated at the administrative and supervisory level by the influx of personnel from the State Education Department. Considerable professional growth takes place in the State Education Department, and the public school systems will become the beneficiaries. As the number of men who have served in both the public school system and the State Education Department increases, the "understanding-communication gap" should be substantially closed.

One key argument against rotation can be immediately envisioned - that it will result in a lack of continuity. Given current scholarly criticisms of administrative program practices, this may in fact prove to be a healthy development. If these

scholars are correct, and this Committee's experience indicates that they are, agencies often seek to keep programs alive even when their original objectives are no longer accepted or have even become dysfunctional. Periodically rotating personnel will not be likely to develop vested interests in assuring the funding of programs that have outlived their usefulness.

Personnel rotation, as envisioned by this Committee, comes very close to the strategy for overcoming undesirable administrative traits developed by one expert on public administration. He suggests a purposeful invasion of bureaucratic structures by "people who are prepared to work as civil servants but who have little or no concern" with those rules of bureaucratic behavior which tend to promote insularity.[17] This can be accomplished with professional propriety--by assuring a large core of professionals rotating regularly between the State Education Department and the public school system.

Rotation would first be implemented on a pilot or experimental basis. A defined cross-section of personnel recruited from the public schools would contract with the State Education Department for a specified period of time. They would be assured of returning to the public school system in an area of their geographical preference.

Evaluation of the rotation system will be difficult because the outputs of the school systems and the State Education Department cannot be correlated with personnel inputs. However, interviews, surveys, questionnaires and related techniques can identify the professional-psychological impact of the program upon participating individuals, as well as their impact upon specific school systems or administrative departments. Causal behavioral relationships can be established.

New Techniques for Supervision

Supervision is a form of communication. It is the supervisor's charge to assure that objectives set at the policy level are effectuated at the implementation level. This Committee takes the position that this requires supervisory inspection of teacher performance.

One task of the State Education Department is to perform this supervisory function by direct classroom observation. This Committee does not believe that it has been performing this task effectively in recent years. Interviews with public school personnel indicate that State supervisors have worked almost exclusively with school superintendents and building principals.

Supervisors should be agents of innovation in techniques, objectives and even content. Yet, instead of playing a dynamic

role, the State supervisor has often contributed to maintaining the status quo. Instead of seeking to improve the quality of instruction by working directly with the teacher, the State supervisor largely ignores him. The ideal facilitator-implementer relationship is lacking.

One problem, in the view of this Committee, is that the supervisory role is not sufficiently perceived as action-oriented. Too often, change, action, or innovation are improperly viewed by State supervisory personnel as a thing (for example, a problem-oriented conference or a new textbook series) instead of as a process. Optimum supervision would lead to continuous professional growth on the part of teachers. This cannot be accomplished through sporadic contacts with teachers or over-indulgence in conferences and staff meetings. Supervisors can promote professional growth on the part of teachers only through extensive field work.

The professional journals are full of criticisms of the performance of State supervisory personnel. Among the chief indictments are the following:

1. methods of State supervision have changed minimally over the past 20 years, at a time when education itself has undergone a significant transformation;

2. the bulk of a state supervisor's workload cannot be justified if it is actually expected to increase the quality of teaching;

3. State Education Department supervisors do not play a leadership role;

4. supervisors neither help teachers to understand State policy objectives nor provide them with techniques for implementing them;

5. there is no sense of shared professional identity between State supervisors and teachers.

A review of the literature on State supervisory personnel demonstrates that New York State is not unique. It shares the problem with many other states. No concrete solutions, however, have been posed.

The answer does not lie in exhorting State supervisors to make greater efforts to observe and communicate with teachers. Nor should undue hopes be pinned upon the results of minimizing conferences and staff meetings. Because the supervisor-teacher

ratio precludes extended direct contact between the two, other methods of maintaining meaningful communication must be sought.

The problem of ineffectual supervision by the State Education Department stems primarily from this supervisor-teacher ratio. Short of a vast increase in the number of supervisors, which this Committee opposes, the duration and frequency of teacher-supervisor relationships cannot be materially increased. The challenge, therefore, is to develop a technique for overcoming this ratio without increasing supervisory personnel. Whether it relies on computer technology, standardized communication techniques or some less obvious tool, it is vital that the Department develop through its supervisory personnel an evaluative, diagnostic and prescriptive capability.

Replacement of Teacher Tenure with Peer Review

A survey of teachers appearing in a recent issue of a professional journal [18] indicates, that contrary to the conventional wisdom on the subject of tenure, teachers are overwhelmingly opposed to length-of-service as the sole criterion for granting tenure. The results of this poll parallel the convictions of this Committee.

Interestingly, the largest percentage of teachers polled (26.2 percent) stated that, where a single criterion is utilized, it should be merit. Another group, 26.1 percent, insisted that tenure should be granted on merit, subject to periodic review. A third group, 23.8 percent, suggested periodic review of tenured teachers by administrative officials.

Overall, four out of five teachers rejected the view that tenure should be granted for length-of-service without use of additional evaluative criteria. Nearly 60 percent maintained that tenure should not be irrevocable. The vast majority of those who argued for virtually irrevocable tenure maintained that it should be granted on merit instead of service. As one respondent put it, length-of-service as the exclusive determinant of tenure weakens the teaching profession, because it "is a mask behind which incompetence hides."

It is especially significant that none of the respondents who favored irrevocable tenure appeared to defend it on the grounds of academic freedom, the only professional argument in its favor. The responses implied that tenure was created for job security rather than academic freedom--a dangerous misunderstanding. Ideally, tenure instills a new sense of professional responsibility and awareness, conferring new responsibilities as well as new securities. New York's experience has not approximated the ideal. In the state's public school system, it has often produced lethargy, indifference and incompetence.

The Instructor poll supports the Committee's position on the granting and regulating of tenure. The Committee believes that the granting and regulating of tenure should be done by teachers, and that tenure should not be absolute, but subject to periodic review. This arrangement would preclude the teacher's isolating himself from professional progress and pupil needs.

As one respondent in the poll put it, "Teachers should, and are more qualified to, police their own ranks." Just as the medical, legal and other professions rely upon peer review proceedings to maintain and enhance professional excellence and standards, so should the teaching profession.

The procedural difficulties encountered in New York and other states in removing tenured teachers from positions which they are not competent to hold have been documented many times.[19] Where virtually irrevocable tenure exists:

1. it is inordinately difficult to establish the gross incompetence required to remove a teacher from tenure;

2. the time frame allows damage to many hundreds of students and to faculty morale before charges can even be formally advanced;

3. another extended legal-administrative process is required after the preferring of charges;

4. the administrative process is slow, cumbersome, and unsatisfactory.

Review of teachers for tenure purposes exclusively by administrators is haphazard at best, relying often upon the competence and subjective views of a single individual - who may or may not be a competent evaluator of teacher performance. Furthermore, there are few if any universally accepted evaluative criteria upon which an administrator can confidentially rely. There is very little agreement as to what constitutes effective teaching. Each case is unique. Competence cannot therefore be judged by universal criteria. Only peer review committees can fill this evaluative void. Finally, there has been great reluctance on the part of teachers to submit to administrative evaluation of their professional performance, primarily for the two reasons just given.

Teachers seem receptive to the concept of periodical peer review. On the other hand, peer review eliminates many of the chief professional shortcomings associated with tenure. It offers several important administrative advantages.

Prior to introducing legislation to alter the present system of tenure , the Committee proposes that the system used in

Oregon be studied, that the State Education Department's experiment be studied, and that a merit system with peer review be introduced on a pilot basis in selected New York State schools. The Committee would be especially concerned to seek the participation of teachers in instituting the system, as well as the consultation of those professions which have peer review procedures. The results of the experiment would be evaluated by an independent team of scholars.

Regional Child Development Centers

It is being increasingly recognized that many problems of children in school stem from improper attention in early childhood. Children with special problems have a better chance of success if their problems are identified early. Remedial action could then be taken before these problems intensify. The fragmentation of services for children contributes to the lack of proper treatment. Even when problems are identified, this knowledge is too seldom linked with the services which could provide corrective action.

The Committee is interested in establishing, as part of its program for regionalizing the educational system, two pilot Child Diagnostic and Development Centers: one in Rochester and one in New York City. These centers would be responsible for insuring that all atypical children within their jurisdiction are provided an educational program suited to their individual needs. The special need could stem from a learning problem -- or from an unusual talent. The centers would work closely with parents and teachers in carrying out this responsibility.

These centers would keep a confidential record on each child, starting with a complete physical examination at age three. The examination could be performed either privately or through a public clinic. It would be performed, however, according to specifications which would meet the requirements of the Child Diagnostic and Development Center. Each child's progress would be monitored at periodic intervals to make it possible to identify any need for modifying the prescribed educational program.

The diagnostic centers would also be responsible for coordinating the work of other agencies providing services to children. They would be particularly concerned with gearing these services to meet family needs, to offset the difficulties which families encounter when they have to adjust to the varied requirements of educational, health and social service agencies. They would involve parents in the planning and operation of services, at the same time that they would take full advantage of the skills of professionals in child development. When a child is referred to a particular remedial program, the centers would be responsible for assessing the value of the referral and for changing that referral if necessary.

The Committee is interested in establishing such centers under regional offices of the State Education Department. In this way, they would enjoy the freedom of an agency outside the operating school system, while at the same time they would have access to those who know the child on a daily basis, the parents and teachers.

Assessment of the project would include an evaluation of its overall impact on the population served, and on subgroups within that population. This would include a study of the communities in which the centers are located and the characteristics of the populations they are meant to serve. Attention would be paid to changes in the physical health of children, in the rate of learning disorders and delinquency and in the coordination and use of community services. An attempt would be made to compare these pilot centers with other child development centers.

Feeding Programs for the Elderly and Others

The Committee has identified the outlines of what it believes to be an optimum program for meeting many of the needs of elderly citizens through a properly-structured school feeding program. The program could also be extended to others, such as pregnant women on welfare.

The concept of feeding the elderly in the public schools did not originate with this Committee. It has been tried, with relative success, in a few communities scattered throughout the United States. Interviews by the Committee indicate that these programs have the following shortcomings:

1. they do not offer meals on week-ends or when school is not in session;

2. they offer only one meal per feeding day;

3. they do not reach a significant proportion of those who would otherwise be eligible for the program;

4. transportation is not provided; and

5. they have not been attempted in urbanized areas, where such programs are most urgently needed.

The Committee's findings suggest that these are the challenges which a fully satisfactory school feeding program must meet. In a nation where, according to population projections, the end of the next decade will find 20 percent of all citizens classified as "elderly," and where current costs per school meal for each elderly citizen is less than eighty cents, it is imperative that we seek a viable means of utilizing our school systems in the feeding and care of the elderly.

At the heart of the Committee's school feeding program would be the serving of two balanced, nutritious meals a day, 365 days a year. This would be accomplished by using strategically-located schools on week-ends and during vacation periods. Interested schools have been identified. Although even one properly prepared meal per day can greatly increase the required nutritional

intake of elderly citizens, two meals can provide the full nutritional complement for most healthy elderly. Studies have shown that the elderly eat too heavily of carbohydrates, and too sparingly of proteins, vegetables and fruits. This unsatisfactory carbohydrate-protein ratio can be latered through carefully conceived menus. It is also worth noting that experts have suggested that the number of elderly in hospitals, nursing homes, and rest homes could be significantly reduced if nutritious meals were available on a regular basis.

The meals would become the glue of a more ambitious program. Using the meals as a magnet, a broad variety of services would be provided in conjunction with them. Programs in health, recreation, crafts, counseling and personal care would be established. The success of the entire program would ultimately depend upon the cooperation and participation of schools, relevant government agencies and private groups.

The by-product of the currently operational school lunch programs most frequently cited is increased morale. This has manifested itself in increased sociability, heightened personal awareness, better personal grooming, neater dwelling quarters and lessened feelings of isolation. The elderly school lunch program has already demonstrated that it can markedly improve the quality of life for most participants. The concept must now be systematically implemented on a more ambitious scale to determine the full extent of its value.

Fundamentally, the program conceived by this Committee requires an expansion of the role which schools have traditionally played, by conferring a more comprehensive community function upon them. This concept is very much in keeping with the Committee's view that the public will more readily underwrite the costs of its school systems when a broader spectrum of the citizenry derives concrete benefits from their existence.

Selected Legislative Problems

Although many of the changes recommended in the Laverne Proposal could be adopted by administrative action, some legislative decisions would be required. The statutory provisions authorizing intermediate school districts were repealed in 1972. The system of Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) is now the only existing basis for Tier Two of the system proposed here for the public schools.

The BOCES system, as provided for in §1958 of the Education Law, is based on a theory of local choice. School districts may come and go within the BOCES system as they wish. Member

school districts may select the services they want from among those offered by their BOCES. BOCES has developed more extensively in the so-called wealthy districts. This is mainly because school districts which have a high total assessed valuation receive more State aid under the BOCES aid formula than they do under the standard State aid formula. (See Table 2) Aside from the disequalizing effect of the BOCES formula, the present system has other shortcomings, including uncertainty of program, problems of management and the exclusion of large cities. Each of these items requires legislative action for correction.

Table 2. Rate of State Aid for Rockland County School Districts (from Joseph Cronin and others, *Organizing and Governing Public Education in New York*, a report to the New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1971, p. 21.)

SCHOOL DISTRICTS	BOCES Aid Ratio		Regular State Aid Ratio
	1970-71 %	1971-72 %	1970-71 %
Clarkstown Central	81.3	83.5	62.0
Lakeside	60.0	50.0	49.0
Nanuet Union Free	84.2	85.3	47.3
No. Rockland Central	80.5	82.2	48.6
Nyack Union Free	84.3	84.9	50.7
Pearl River Union Free	84.1	86.6	61.2
Ramapo Central No. 1	82.4	84.2	52.1
Ramapo Central No. 2	85.9	87.5	64.0
So. Orangetown Central	80.5	81.3	57.8

Management

Two major points made in this proposal are: (1) that Tier Two (to be built on the existing BOCES system) should be independent, and (2) that the top executive of a Regional School District (now a BOCES) should not be hampered with responsibilities which conflict with the job of running a Regional School District. Some objections to the proposed reorganization are based on difficulties which are apparent rather than real. For example, one of New York's leading district Superintendents, Dr. William T. Callahan of the Nassau County BOCES, has said:

> Our major disagreement with the point of view taken by Senator Laverne is that we implore the Commissioner and the Board of Regents not to establish any regional district (BOCES or otherwise) which would have line authority over local school districts in this state.

> We see regionalism as having a bright future, but only to the extent that the concept does not intrude upon the exercise of defensible well-thought-out local control of education by freely elected board members in the local districts and their chosen chief school administrators and staff members.[26]

The disagreement cited here is only apparent. The Laverne Proposal would not give Tier Two line authority over Tier One (although at least one critic has recommended that it should--to improve coordination). The Laverne design would enhance local control by enabling local districts to cooperate with each other on matters which are not manageable on a strictly local basis. It would improve management at the regional level by relieving the staff of management responsibility for Tier One. The BOCES superintendency is a full-time job requiring concentration of effort.

Legislation should be introduced directing the Commissioner to create Regional Offices of the State Education Department. Whether or not it will be necessary to create the office of Assistant Commissioner for each region by legislation remains to be determined. It could perhaps be done administratively by the Commissioner. SED Regions could be defined by the Commissioner in cooperation with local districts and Regional School Districts. In any event, Article 45 of the Education Law, "Supervisory Districts," needs a complete revision.

The expansion of various areas of responsibility for the BOCES would require changes in §1958 of the Education Law, including amendments to provide:

1. Authority to conduct instruction for private school pupils under a dual enrollment arrangement,

2. Authority to centralize transportation systems and data processing systems,

3. BOCES membership for all school districts. The proportionate sharing of administrative costs could be continued. The aid formula should be redesigned.

District Superintendents' Salaries

A District Superintendent is paid from several sources, a situation which underscores the conflict of interest built into this office. When the Committee staff started to gather information on the office of District Superintendent, it discovered that no one in State government knows what these officials are being paid. Table 3 presents information collected

from the State Education Department, the Teachers Retirement System, the State Retirement Fund and from a telephone canvas of District Superintendents by the department. The amounts entered in the column headed "Total '71-'72 Salary per Nov.'72 Telephone Survey by State Education Department" include funds allotted for expenses. Other expense funds are available to the District Superintendents, but the Committee staff has been unable to get information on these expense accounts. Table 4 presents, for comparative purposes, the salaries of officials in the State Education Department. The level of responsibility of a district superintendent is now comparable to that of an assistant commissioner.

If the State were to withdraw its financial support for salaries of the BOCES superintendents, this would make available approximately $2 million a year for the operation of Regional SED offices.

To summarize, the following legislation should be considered in order to regionalize the public school system:

1. A complete recodification of the Article concerning District Superintendents.

2. A directive to the Commissioner to create regions, and if deemed necessary, an office of Regional Assistant Commissioner.

3. Legislation to broaden the authority of BOCES to include that of data processing, dual enrollment and centralized transportation systems.

4. Revision of the BOCES State aid formula.

5. Legislation to modernize and update the governance of the BOCES. (Eventually consideration must be given to the election of the BOCES board by popular vote. This can probably not be accomplished, however, until a single date for school elections can be established throughout the entire BOCES district.)

6. Legislation to allow large cities to participate in BOCES.

* * *

Responsibility for effective school programs must be well defined. This definition of responsibility must be combined with the flexibility to innovate and with techniques for evaluating what these programs do for children, so that accountability can be made meaningful. A clarification of accountability and of evaluation will provide a better basis for both stimulating and assessing innovations in education.

Table 3. Salaries of District Superintendents, 1971-1972. District Superintendents receive salaries from several sources, including the State Education Department, the BOCES, county governments and federally-funded projects. The salary information in this table was obtained from the State Education Department, the Teachers Retirement System, the State Retirement Fund and from a telephone canvas of District Superintendents by the department staff.

SUPERVISORY DISTRICT	DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT	1971-1972 Salaries				Total '71-'72 Salary per St. Ed.Dept.Rcds.	Total '71-'72 Salary per Nov. '72 Tele. Survey by St.Ed.Dept.
		Salary from St. Ed. Dept.	Salary from BOCES	Salary from Other Sources	Total Salary		
Erie I	Crooks, Clifford N.	*[4]	*	*	*	*	45,005.00
Rockland	Prentice, Justus A.	16,160.00[1]	23,529.00	*	39,689.00	40,090.00	40,090.00
Nassau	Callahan, William T.	17,762.00[5]	4,803.75	19,536.00	42,101.75	40,000.00	40,000.00
Westchester II	Russo, Thomas V.*	17,762.00	12,495.00	*	30,257.00	39,440.00	39,440.00
Orange-Ulster	Crist, Mrs. Amy Bull	17,762.00[5]	20,000.00	3,000.00	40,762.00	38,505.00	38,505.00
Suffolk I	Hines, James	17,762.00[5]	16,795.00	5,500.00	40,057.00	38,500.00	38,500.00
Monroe 2	TenHaken, Richard E.	17,762.00	16,823.00	3,800.00	38,385.00	35,000.00	38,385.00
Oneida-Madison-Herkimer I	Johnson, F. Wright	16,931.00	13,305.00	*	30,236.00	34,705.00	34,705.00
Chautauqua	LoGuidice, Philip	17,608.00[5]	15,980.00	2,400.00	35,988.00	34,300.00	34,300.00
Albany-Schenectady-Schoharie	Maybury, George W.	17,762.00[5]	18,750.00	*	36,512.00	34,255.00	34,255.00
Saratoga-Warren	Myers, F. Donald	18,085.00	4,134.00	2,362.00	24,581.00	33,705.00	33,705.00
Erie 2	Ormsby, Wallace D.	17,526.00[5]	17,833.00	*	35,359.00	32,255.00	32,255.00
Onondaga-Madison	Henry, Irvin E.	16,931.00[1]	15,134.00	*	32,065.00	31,628.00	31,628.00
Greene 2-Delaware-Schoharie-Otsego	Davis, Charles	17,761.95[1]	*	*	17,761.95	31,855.00	31,855.00
Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga	Witko, Edward S.	17,762.00[4]	15,500.00	*	*	33,262.00	33,262.00
Broome	Distin, Leslie F.	17,762.00[5]	15,500.00	*	33,262.00	31,500.00	31,500.00
Clinton-Essex	Fritz, William	17,608.00	8,878.00	2,100.00	28,586.00	31,400.00	31,400.00
Suffolk 2	Phelan, William F.	17,762.00	*	6,500.00	24,262.00	31,350.00	31,350.00
Monroe I	Harris, Kenneth F.	17,181.92[5]	11,524.00	4,950.00	33,655.92	31,000.00	31,000.00
Washington-Warren-Hamilton-Essex	Dearlove, Homer P.	17,762.00[5]	14,500.00	*	32,262.00	30,691.00	30,691.00
Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego	Wiegand, H. Eugene	17,762.00[3]	12,838.00	*	30,600.00	30,600.00	30,600.00
Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego	Busacker, William E.	17,762.00[5]	15,000.00	*	32,762.00	30,505.00	30,505.00
Cortland	Franklin, Walter G.	16,674.00[5]	*	*	16,674.00	30,420.00	31,174.00
Sullivan	Schwalbenberg, Peter J.	17,762.00[5]	14,500.00	*	32,262.00	30,005.00	30,005.00
Livingston-Steuben-Wyoming	Womack, James G.	8,822.46[2]	7,247.50	*	16,069.96	30,000.00	30,000.00
Jefferson	Forrester, Elwood A.	17,608.00[1]	13,032.00	*	30,640.00	29,505.00	29,505.00
Oswego	Ramer, Burton	17,761.99[5]	13,995.00	*	31,756.99	29,500.00	29,500.00
Cayuga	Haley, Paul W.	17,762.00[5]	14,400.00	*	32,162.00	29,400.00	29,400.00
Ontario-Wayne-Seneca-Cayuga-Yates	Loveless, John E.	17,608.00[5]	13,052.00	*	30,660.00	28,105.00	28,105.00
Orleans-Niagara	Sparks, Richard D.	17,762.00[5]	12,500.00	*	30,262.00	28,005.00	28,005.00
Ulster	Roose, Jack L.	17,762.00[5]	12,495.00	*	30,257.00	28,000.00	28,000.00
Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery	Smith, Kenneth A.	17,762.00[5]	12,000.00	*	29,762.00	27,505.00	27,505.00
Steuben-Allegany	Miller, N. Francis	18,085.00[1]	8,556.00	*	26,641.00	26,805.00	26,805.00
Putnam-Westchester	Gividen, Noble J.	17,762.00	26,000,00	*	43,762.00	26,000.00	39,500.00
St. Lawrence	Turcotte, Charles	17,762.00[5]	10,495.00	*	28,257.00	26,000.00	26,000.00
Lewis	Ford, Kenneth E.	17,608.00	11,465.00	*	29,073.00	25,927.00	25,927.00
Rensselaer-Columbia	Sackett, John	17,760.40[2]	*	4,200.00	21,960.40	25,805.00	25,805.00
Dutchess	Rielle, Donald F.	8,822.46[2]	*	*	8,822.46	25,800.00	25,800.00
Allegany	Farnsworth, William F.	17,762.00[1]	10,000.00	*	28,100.00	25,505.00	27,762.00
Franklin-Essex-Hamilton	Whitman, Robert R.	17,762.00[5]	10,000.00	*	27,762.00	25,505.00	25,505.00
Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga	Goodrich, Irving D.	17,608.00[5]	9,278.00	*	26,886.00	25,273.00	25,273.00
Genesee-Wyoming	Saxton, John L.	10,380.18[2]	*	*	10,380.18	23,800.00	23,800.00
Cattaraugus-Erie-Wyoming	Smith, Erle	17,762.00[1]	6,173.00	*	23,935.00	23,800.00	23,800.00
Greene I	Clark, Franklin B.	21,628.00[1]	*	*	21,628.00	20,505.00	20,505.00
Suffolk 3	Wheaton, Gordon A.	17,762.00[3]	*	6,300.00	24,062.00	*	*
Oneida 2-Hamilton-Herkimer	Bliss, D. Everett	17,762.00[3]	14,500.00	1,900.00	34,162.00	*	*
Madison-Oneida	Ruppert, Conrad H.	*	*	16,931.00	16,931.00	*	*

1. Due to difference in calendar year of department and BOCES. Salary increase in effect April 1, not included in department figures.
2. Due to service less than 12 months i.e. new appointments.
3. Not available in department files.
4. Retired.
5. $2200.00 expense lulus not included in department figures.

* No report available.

Table 4. Management Level Salaries in the Organizational Unit, State Education Department, 1972-1973

	Title of Position	'72-'73 Salary
Administration of the Department	Commissioner of Education	51,275.00
	Asst. Comm. for Long Range Planning	32,972.00
	Assistant to the Commissioner	19,875.00
	Exec. Deputy Comm. of Education	44,176.00
	Exec. Asst. to the Commissioner	27,134.00
Legal Services	Deputy Comm. for Legal Affairs	41,064.00
	Asst. Comm. Ad. Services	32,972.00
Ed. Finance and Management Services	Assoc. Comm. of Education	37,020.00
	Asst. Comm. for Ed. Finance and Management	32,972.00
Research and Evaluation Studies	Assoc. Comm. of Education	37,020.00
	Asst. Comm. for Research and Evaluation	32,972.00
Elementary and Secondary and Continued Education Services	Deputy Comm. of Education	41,064.00
	Assoc. Comm. of Education	37,020.00
	Asst. Comm. for Compensatory Education	32,972.00
Center for Planning Elem., Secondary and Cont. Ed.	Asst. Comm. for Elem. & Secondary Ed. Planning	32,972.00
Instructional Services	Asst. Comm. for Instructional Services	32,972.00
School Admin. Superv. Services.	Asst. Comm. for School Services	32,972.00
N.Y.C. Decentralization	Assoc. Comm. of Education	37,020.00
Vocational Ed. Services	Asst. Comm. for Occupational Services	32,972.00
Higher Education Services	Deputy Comm. of Education	41,064.00
	Assoc. Comm. of Education	37,020.00
	Asst. Comm. for Higher Education	32,972.00
Higher Education Academic Services	Director, Division of Higher Education	29,997.00
Higher Education Planning Activities	Asst. Comm for Higher Education Planning	32,972.00
	Coordinator of State Aid to Non-Public Schools	29,997.00
Professional Education Services	Asst. Comm. for Professional Education	32,972.00
Library Services	Asst. Comm. for Libraries	32,972.00
State Museum and Other Cultural Activities	Assoc. Comm. of Education	37,020.00
Museum and Science Services	Asst. Comm. for State Museum Services	32,972.00
Historical Activities	Asst. Comm. for State History	32,972.00
Exam. and Scholarship Center	Asst. Comm. for Exams and Scholarships	32,972.00

Imminent change in the system of educational finance presents a unique opportunity for improving the schools. To take full advantage of this opportunity, we must change those features of the school system which inhibit the involvement of the local community, which limit educational opportunities for those with special talents or special problems, which cause the neglect of resources outside the schools. Cumbersome administrative arrangements, which limit the effectiveness of professionals in the schools and in the department, should be changed. The schools must be given the flexibility and support necessary to produce quality education for all our young people. A carefully designed regional system is required to make these improvements possible.

NOTES

1. Craig M. Smith, Memorandum on the Subject of State and Local Responsibilities for Regionalism in Public Education in New York State, Rochester Center for Governmental and Community Research, Inc., September 14, 1971, pp. 21-25.

2. Regionalism: A Process for New York State Elementary, Secondary, and Continuing Education, Report of Regents Task Force on Regionalism, October 20, 1971, p. 22.

3. Ibid., p. 27.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p. 34.

6. Ibid., p. 35.

7. Ibid., p. 36.

8. Smith, September 14, 1971 memonrandum, p. 3.

9. Ibid., p. 23.

10. New York State Education Department, News Release, October 29, 1971.

11. Ibid., p. 2.

12. Ibid., p. 3.

13. Report of the New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Fleischmann Commission), Volume 3, Chapter 11, "Governance," p. 11.35.

14. Ibid., p. 11.59.

15. Ibid., Chapter 12, "New York City: A Special Case," p. 12.45.

16. Ibid., Chapter 11, "Governance," p. 11A.31.

17. Ibid., p. 11.51

18. Report of the Monroe County Educational Planning Committee, A Proposed Model for a County Federation of School Districts, August 1971.

19. Henry M. Brickell, Organizing New York State for Educational Change (Albany, N.Y.: New York State Education Department, 1961).

20. Ibid., p. 33.

21. Ibid., p. 80

22. New York State Education Department, REDESIGN, Annual Report, 1970-71.

23. Matthew P. Dumont, "Down the Bureaucracy," Transaction, 7, 12 (October 1970), p. 43.

24. "Teacher Opinion Poll; How Should Teachers Tenure Be Granted" Instructor, 80, 8 (April, 1971), p.35

25. For example, see Kingo Takata, "The Dismissal of a Tenured Teacher," National Elementary Principal, 7, 12 (February 1971), pp. 44-51.

26. William T. Callahan, "Regionalism," Time Frame, 1, 3 (May-June 1972), p. 12.